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OBAMA BOOSTS U.S. AFGHAN MISSION, PG 14

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Celebrity pg 50

Lambert's father wasn't amused

There is bad sex between the sheets

BOOKS A cringe-inducing passage that compares a sexual encounter to battle with an one-eyed mythological monster was awarded Britain's Bad Sex in Fiction Prize Monday.

The editors of the Literary Review magazine said bestselling American author Jonathan Littell won the prize for describing a sex act as "a jolt that emptied my head like a spoon scraping the inside of a soft-boiled egg."

The offending passage compared female genitalia to various Greek fiends, including the mythical monster Gorgon and "a motionless Cyclops whose single eye never blinks."

Littell's book, The Kindly Ones, is a 900-page epic narrated by a fictional Nazi officer.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Raptors Jack to the rack

CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Raptors' Jarrett Jack drives on Washington Wizards' Brendan Haywood last night at the Air Canada Centre. Jack scored 18 points but Toronto lost 106-102. More coverage, page 26.

Hub of activity

Union Station project to break ground in spring

Union Station users should brace for a long haul as the $640-million renovation of the historic transportation hub gets going in spring. The work, including excavating a large new lower level to house shops and restaurants, will take until 2015.

Though it's a big project, it's not overly complex, said Graham Brown, president of Carillion Construction Inc., whose Vanbots division was named yesterday as general contractor.

"Probably the biggest challenge ... is dealing with the 65 million people a year that come through this concourse, and making sure that life goes on as well as it has to date, during the period of construction."

Commuters will encounter lots of construction hoarding, Brown said. "We'll make that hoarding attractive, we'll try and make it amusing in places so people bear with us during construction."

When the revitalization is complete, the new Union Station will rank with the best in the U.S. and Europe, vowed Mayor David Miller.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Great Hall

- The project will include restoration and repair on the classic Great Hall, as well as upgrading the retail uses there. A new GO concourse will be created on the York Street (west) side, along with the lower-level retail area.

News on the Move

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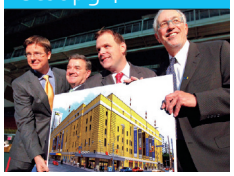
Local pg 4



Makeover for MLG

On the web

Visit metronews.ca for news updates

Hockey, social networking score as top Net searches

The meteoric rise of Twitter, the love for Canada's game, and the laziness of web surfers were highlighted in Google and Yahoo's annual lists of the year's top search queries, which were released yesterday.

According to Google, the world's most popular search engine, Canadians searched most for Facebook, YouTube, lyrics, weather, Hotmail, Google, games, Yahoo, map and Kijiji. The Top 10 list was virtually identical to 2008's.

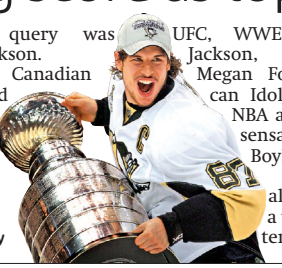
Twitter was also the fastest-rising search word for Google users in the U.S. and Brazil, while globally the top query was Michael Jackson.

The top Canadian search word on Yahoo was NHL, followed by RuneScape, UFC, WWE, Michael Jackson, actress Megan Fox, American Idol, NASCAR, NBA and singing sensation Susan Boyle.

"NHL has always been a very strong term in Canada," said Yahoo spokesman Huw Evans.

Yahoo's most popular news searches were for H1N1, the Iran election and the murder of Victoria Stafford, compared to Google News' Top 3 of swine flu, Susan Boyle and Natasha Richardson.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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ScanLife

Local

Car crashes into store, woman hospitalized

A woman has been rushed to hospital with serious injuries after she was struck by a car that crashed into a HomeSense store in Mississauga. Peel region police say the driver lost control in the parking lot, struck the woman and went through the brick wall of the store. The driver of the vehicle was not injured, but was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tomorrow's Metro

Relating
Sofi Papamarko looks at what happens when relationships are conducted in public.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Alongside the new U.S. strategy for Afghan war, Canada gears up to refocus on Kandahar city at **metronews.ca/canada**

Blogs TFC director of business operations Paul Beirne joins It's Called Football to discuss a bid by the Argos to play games at BMO field.

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Tories derail question period

Speaker Steve Peters walks out over Hillier and Murdoch's antics

An Opposition protest over tax harmonization that's created chaos in the Ontario legislature ended up derailing the daily question period in the chamber yesterday.

Speaker Steve Peters announced his unusual move over the ear-splitting din of the Progressive Conservatives, who have staged a sit-in over the government's refusal to hold province-wide public consultations on the tax change.

Bill Murdoch and Randy Hillier, two party mavericks who were banished Monday from the chamber, rejoined their caucus colleagues yesterday after sleeping overnight in an adjoining lobby that contains couches and a bathroom.

Instead of taking their assigned seats in the backbenches, Hiller and Murdoch sat in the two front seats closest to Peters, where they led their colleagues in an unrelenting campaign to drown out debate by shouting and pounding their desks.

DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

With the house lights turned off, Conservative MPPs Randy Hillier, bottom left, and Bill Murdoch stage a sit-in yesterday at the Ontario Legislature in protest of the Liberal government's plan to introduce the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) at Queen's Park.

The conflict escalated as Peters tried to bring the unruly Tories under control by pausing the proceedings several times and refusing to recognize the votes of party members who weren't sitting in their own seats.

The battle reached a climax when, despite repeated requests to return to their assigned seats during question period, Murdoch and Hillier refused to budge.

That prompted Peters to walk out, scuttling the only hour in the day where opposition parties are allowed to hold the government to account in the legislature.

"I am not prepared to continue with question period while these two members are occupying the front benches," Peters said.

No resolution seemed to be in sight yesterday despite several closed-door meetings with representatives from all three parties.

The Tories insist they won't give up until they get at least one day of public hearings on the HST legislation outside Toronto, while the governing Liberals derided the antics as nothing more than playing for the cameras. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grits support 'Harper sales tax'

Michael Ignatieff says federal Liberals will support legislation to implement a harmonized sales tax in Ontario and British Columbia, despite previously bashing it as a job-killing "Harper sales tax."

The Liberal leader announced his decision yesterday after meeting his MPs, many of whom felt trapped in no-win situation and were torn over what to do.

Some MPs fear a backlash from voters in the two provinces, who are becoming increasingly angry about the prospect of paying more for a host of goods and services.

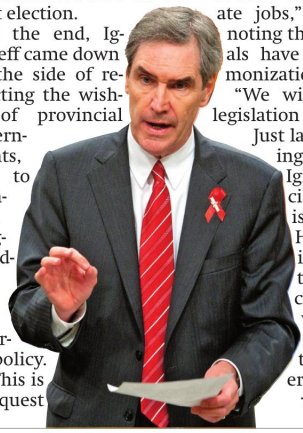
Others fear alienating the Liberal governments in Toronto and Victoria, whose campaign machines will be vital to the success of federal Liberals in the next election.

In the end, Ignatieff came down on the side of respecting the wishes of provincial governments, not to mention long-standing federal Liberal policy.

"This is a request from the provinces because they believe it'll improve the competitiveness of their economy and create jobs," Ignatieff said, noting that federal Liberals have promoted harmonization for 15 years.

"We will support this legislation in Parliament."

Just last summer, during a tour of B.C., Ignatieff criticized Prime Minister Stephen Harper for pushing provinces in the midst of a recession to adopt what he derisively referred to as the "Harper sales tax." THE CANADIAN PRESS



Curriculum review not meant to be an overhaul: Minister

EDUCATION A review of Ontario's school curriculum seeks to make sure children in Grades 1 to 8 have enough time to learn the skills they need to go on with their education and is not meant to overhaul the entire system, the province's education minister said yesterday.

Education Minister Kathleen Wynne said teachers have been complaining about the curriculum for some time, saying it's overcrowded and doesn't give kids the time needed for practical learning.

An initial discussion paper found that too many "expectations" were built into the curriculum designed 10 years ago.

But Wynne said the move wasn't about creating a new curriculum. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

EXPANSION Parcel delivery company UPS Canada officially opened its expanded Toronto distribution centre yesterday after a $72 million expansion that has doubled the size of the operation just north of Toronto. The company said the new operation will help boost the business by using technology to simplify the import and export of goods. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Thieves steal keys, vehicles

Thieves helped themselves to vehicle keys at a Honda dealership in Burlington and then helped themselves to five vehicles. They broke into the dealership between Saturday afternoon and Monday morning and stole the keys. THE CANADIAN PRESS

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Investigators took more documents and dog food from the Toronto Humane Society yesterday.

MNR joins humane society investigation

PROBE Ministry of Natural Resources investigators have joined the probe at the Toronto Humane Society.

The facility was raided last Thursday by animal welfare officials armed with a warrant and animal cruelty charges were laid against five employees.

OSPCA lead investigator Kevin Strooband says the provincial ministry officials are working under their own warrant — which expired at 6 p.m. yesterday — investigating allegations that laws governing the release of raccoons into the wild were broken.

Strooband says the legislation calls for raccoons to be released within a one-kilometre radius to prevent the spread of rabies and other disease and it's alleged the humane society released raccoons further afield.

He adds the OSPCA's task of checking animals at the shelter is only about 25 per cent complete and the investigation could last a few more weeks.

The OSPCA has said animals were found in appalling conditions and seven had to be put down.

The society has said it would challenge the OSPCA search warrant, claiming its scope is too broad.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

ARREST Toronto police have made an arrest after allegations a 14-year-old girl was sexually assaulted by a man she met on the Internet. Police allege it happened last Thursday after the girl agreed to meet a man she met on a social networking website. Muhammad Ali, 20, of Toronto, was arrested yesterday and charged with sexual assault, sexual interference and invitation to sexual touching.

LAWSUIT Rogers Communications Inc. says it has launched legal action against BCE Inc.'s Bell Canada, the latest twist in a battle over who can claim to have the fastest, largest or most reliable wireless network in Canada. Rogers filed a claim in B.C. Supreme Court yesterday in an attempt to stop Bell from perpetuating claims that Rogers says are false and misleading. In the claim, Rogers said Bell cannot promote its network as being the largest, because it is shared with Telus Corp. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gardens alive again

Ryerson and Loblaw breathe life into former home of Maple Leafs

There will be blades on the ice again at Toronto's storied Maple Leaf Gardens.

The federal government is contributing $20 million toward the $60-million plan to turn the hockey shrine into an athletic facility, rink and grocery store, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced yesterday.

Ryerson University will contribute $20 million through increased student fees and Loblaw Companies Ltd. will partner with Ryerson to raise the remaining $20 million through fundraising.

The Ryerson Sports and Recreation Centre will have, among other things, a NHL-size skating rink, Flaherty said.

"With today's announcement we're keeping Maple Leaf Gardens as a special place for generations of Canadians to come," he said.

"This centre will generate excitement across the Greater Toronto Area. It will create jobs in the Toronto region once it's completed."

DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Galen G. Weston, executive chairman of Loblaw Companies Limited, from left, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Minister of Infrastructure John Baird and Ryerson University president Sheldon Levy unveil plans yesterday for the renovated Maple Leaf Gardens.

Earlier this year, Ryerson students voted to pay an extra $126 per year in athletic fees for new facilities.

"We are bringing Maple Leaf Gardens back to life," said Ryerson president Sheldon Levy.

"Our varsity sports and athletics will have the facilities and opportunities to excel."

Maple Leaf Gardens opened in 1931, hosting its first Maple Leaf game on Nov. 12 that year, when the Maple Leafs lost 2-1 to the Chicago Blackhawks.

The Leafs moved down the street to the Air Canada Centre in February 1999 and Loblaw bought Maple Leaf Gardens in 2004 from Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TTC union set to elect new boss today

TRANSIT The TTC union boss Torontonians love to hate is up for re-election by his members today.

Seeing Bob Kinnear, 39, defeated might give some satisfaction to those riders stranded in last year's Friday midnight strike or the one-day wildcat walkout of May 2006.

But a different leader at the city's powerful transit union wouldn't guarantee labour peace on the TTC, particularly as Toronto continues to struggle financially. While he acknowledges transit workers have a responsibility to the public, Kinnear's focus is on his members. If he's re-elected, he wants to use the next round of contract talks to improve their benefits, which he says have fallen behind other city workers.

Challenger Cosimo Lacaria, a 25-year employee, is among the 60 per cent of the union's 9,800 members that work in maintenance, the division whose vote undermined the 2008 deal with the city that Kinnear had endorsed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The competition

- Bob Kinnear's only challenger for the leadership of Local 113 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Cosimo Lacaria, 49, says he will apologize to the public for last year's weekend strike if he is elected — right after he apologizes to the transit workers themselves, who he says were left to confront angry riders that night.

NFL Football Dreams For Toronto

With the Jets vs. Bills game sold out, is Toronto destined to land its own team? Find out more on the new quest to bring some NFL glory to Toronto.

Tonight 6

Ken Shaw & Christine Bentley

CTV NEWS

Alleged prowler faces burglary charges

Toronto police say an alleged prowler arrested Monday at a Davenport Road home has been charged with nine other residential burglaries. Jose Leocadio, 27, faces numerous charges including break-and-enter and possession of stolen property. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

THEFTS Police are warning the public to be on the lookout for a pair of middle-aged women targeting box stores in a string of thefts across the GTA this holiday season. The two suspects reportedly walk into stores such as Future Shop, Winners, Costco and Ikea and pick up some items to purchase. When they go to pay for the items, police say one of the women distracts the cashier while the other grabs cash out of the open till.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Economy takes a toll on food banks

A record number of people are turning to food banks in Ontario as the province battles an economic downturn, the Ontario Association of Food Banks said yesterday.

About 375,000 Ontario residents use food banks each month, even though one third of people in those households are employed, the group said, adding it has seen a 19 per cent spike in the number of people served since last year.

"There is little doubt that this has been our most difficult year in a generation."
Adam Spence, executive director, Ontario Association of Food Banks

"There is little doubt that this has been our most difficult year in a generation," said Adam Spence, executive director of the Ontario Association of Food Banks.

"The alarming numbers offer a front-line reality that is a counter-point to the green shoots and leading economic indicators that point to a technical end to the recession."

The group is calling on the province to, among other things, review its social assistance rules and create a farm donation tax credit for producers who support local food banks.

Premier Dalton McGuinty called the increase "sad, but perhaps not surprising" given the economic situation in a province facing a $25-billion deficit.

"It's not surprising that there are more people who are having to avail themselves of the resources to be found at food banks," McGuinty said.

"I would ask Ontarians to keep that in mind, particularly during the holiday season, when we have an opportunity, each in our own way, to make a contribution to our local food banks."

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Snowball fight ... Santa?

JOHN R. KENNEDY/FOR METRO TORONTO

With downtown Toronto's first snow of the season at their feet, these blue Santas couldn't resist having a good-natured snowball fight. Warner Bros. trucked snow into Yonge-Dundas Square yesterday to promote Blu-rays.

Coin set to join iconic Canadian Tire money?

BUSINESS In 1958, Canada got its second currency — Canadian Tire money.

Come 2009, Canadian Tire Corp. is introducing a one-dollar coin to complement its multi-hued, low-denomination stable of widely-hoarded bills.

Canadian Tire spokeswoman Lisa Gibson declined to confirm the coin's launch. She would say only that the company plans an announcement today on the direction of the rewards program.

However, a copy of a flyer destined for Canadian Tire stores in Quebec shows an ad for a limited edition one-dollar coin, available to customers who spend at least $25 this weekend. Images of the coin itself have also been posted on collectors' websites, revealing it to look a bit like a quarter.

There has been speculation that the company might eliminate paper money altogether. Canadian Tire has been making a gradual shift away from emphasizing its paper money. Customers now receive paper money only if they use cash or debit.

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Coalition urges Harper to push human rights in China

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is being urged to use his first visit to China to push for improved human rights. The Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China says Canada must show moral courage in addressing rights issues with Chinese authorities. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Gun missing from stolen cruiser

Police in eastern Ontario have recovered a stolen cruiser, but a handgun that was in the trunk is missing. The unmarked police cruiser was stolen at an officer's home in Long Sault and was located yesterday afternoon in Cornwall. But a lock box that was in the truck — which contained the officer's handgun — was gone.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa **Arbitrator wanted**

PAWEL DWULIT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A public-service employee stands on Parliament Hill during a rally of striking museum employees in Ottawa yesterday. The workers are calling for an arbitrator to help end the strike, which has been on since Sept. 21.

Ski jumpers seek appeal

'It's even bigger than women's rights, it's human rights': Spokesperson

VANCOUVER 2010 **Games**

A group of female ski jumpers hope to take their fight to be part of the 2010 Winter Games to the Supreme Court of Canada.

A lawyer for the women said they filed a request before the country's highest court yesterday, seeking leave to appeal two lower court decisions that found the Charter of Rights does not apply to which sports are included in the Olympics.

The decision to appeal was made in part because the issue of discrimination is bigger than one event at the Games, said a spokesperson for the women.

"It's even bigger than women's rights. It's human rights," Deedee Corradini, the president of Women's Ski Jumping USA, said in an interview.

"Internationally, it has implications for whether organizations can come into a country, such as the (International Olympic Committee) and ignore the constitution of that country."

The Games are about two months away so the women are asking the Supreme Court to expedite their decision on whether they'll hear the case and then also make a fast decision.

"I recognize that this is a tough road," said Ross Clark, the lawyer for the women.

"We may not succeed, on both grounds. Even getting leave is a tough thing, one in 10 are successful."

Clark said the men's ski jumping teams aren't picked until late January, so if the court gave a decision in mid-January, a women's team could be assembled. Corradini said the women have been competing on their circuit and will be ready for the Games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In this November file photo, ski jumper Lindsey Van, left, of Park City, Utah, comforts fellow athlete Katie Willis of Calgary after a B.C. Court of Appeal in Vancouver denied a bid to have women's ski jumping included in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Follow the Olympic torch's journey with an interactive map at: **metronews.ca/sports**

1 in 3 vaccinated against H1N1 virus

Flu **Outbreak**

HEALTH Nearly one in three Canadians have been vaccinated against the H1N1 virus, figures provided by provincial and territorial health authorities show.

Some jurisdictions have hit higher numbers, with the three northern territories reporting they have all vaccinated more than 50 per cent of their populations. But at the other end of the scale, Ontario has immunized roughly 25 per cent of its population.

The numbers are probably among the highest in the world so far, though even the World Health Organization is having difficulty tracking H1N1 vaccination uptake, a rapidly moving target.

But the Canadian average — roughly 32 per cent — is still only on a par with the percentage of Canadians who get seasonal flu shots each year. And it is well below what health officials hope to achieve with the pandemic vaccination effort.

"I think we've got a ways to go," said Dr. Perry Kendall, chief medical officer of health for British Columbia, which had vaccinated about 28 per cent of its population by last Friday.

In some jurisdictions, efforts have until recently been focused solely on high-risk groups. With the throwing open of clinics to all who want H1N1 vaccine, rates should continue to climb, some say.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

RULING The risk of harmful contamination was not foreseeable in the 1960s when highway reconstruction waste was buried on an Ontario dairy farm that later failed and as such the province was not negligent, Ontario's top court wrote yesterday in striking down a $1.7-million decision against the province.

CRASH A float plane that crashed off Saturna Island, B.C., killing six, has been raised from the ocean floor, allowing investigators to begin their search for answers to what caused the tragedy. The right wing was missing and the left wing was intact but damaged. Both pontoons had been sheared off. The single-engine de Havilland Canada Beaver owned by Seair Seaplanes of Richmond, B.C., crashed on takeoff from Lyall Harbour on Sunday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Quebec Liberals accused of turning famed daycare program into a "pay-to-play" scheme. Scan this barcode for the full article.

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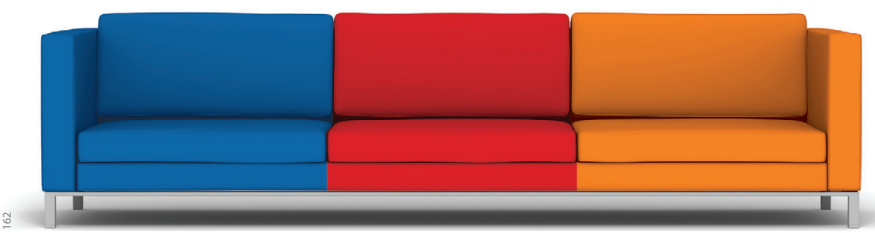

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N.B. records record-high deficit
New Brunswick has recorded a $754-million deficit for the 2009-10 fiscal year, the highest deficit in the province's history. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NATO puts Canada in charge of tactical area

Leadership in Arghandab to change in new year

Before the backdrop of U.S. President Barack Obama's long-awaited new Afghanistan strategy, NATO commanders are putting Canada's military command in charge of the tactically vital Arghandab district north of Kandahar city.

As a result, two full battalions of troops already in the country — one American, the other Afghan — will come under the control of Brig. Gen. Dan Menard, the commander of the Canadian contingent known as Task Force Kandahar, by the new year.

Shakeup

- The change in the boundaries of Canada's area of operations are part of a more general shakeup of NATO activities ahead of Barack Obama's decision on troop levels in Afghanistan. Obama announced plans last night to send about 30,000 more American soldiers over the next six months

"You'll get all these guys together focused on Arghandab under the command of Dan Menard," said Brig. Gen. Frederick Hodges, director of operations for NATO's southern command. "I think that's a significant manifestation of the importance of that place on the city."

Under U.S. Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal, NATO has signalled its desire to shift the focus of counter-insurgency efforts to urban areas; Kandahar has been singled out among them.

Many Kandaharis consider the Arghandab as an extension of the city, where security and development are already Canada's responsibility.

MORE COVERAGE PG 14

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway Peter MacKay responds to a question yesterday during question period in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

MPs vote for public abuse inquiry

The House of Commons has voted in favour of holding a judicial inquiry into the treatment of Afghan detainees, but the majority motion will likely be ignored by the governing Conservatives.

The Harper government, citing national security concerns, has been fiercely resisting attempts to fully probe the sensitive issue of whether Canada met all its international legal obligations in the handover of Afghan prisoners captured by Canadian troops.

Argument

- Defence Minister Peter MacKay argued a judicial inquiry would be costly and redundant because the Military Public Complaints Commission and the Commons defence committee are both examining the issue.

Tories voted en masse against the NDP motion yesterday, but with the support of Liberal and Bloc Québécois MPs, it passed by a vote of 146-129.

New Democrat MP Paul Dewar, in introducing the motion, noted the contradicting stories that have emerged at a Commons committee probing what was known about abuse in Afghan prisons in 2006-07.

Dewar said that's why an "independent lens" is needed — a judicial inquiry that can get all the documentary evidence and "sort out the contradictions."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grits say Tories hiding stimulus job numbers

The Harper government is well aware of how many jobs are being created through its massive infrastructure stimulus spending but is embarrassed to publish the numbers, the Liberals are charging.

The Conservatives have always maintained that they do not track the job creation that stems from their $16-billion effort to cushion the blow of the recession.

But Liberal MP Gerard Kennedy produced paperwork yesterday from the Ottawa-Ontario agreement on the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. The form shows the federal government required municipalities to report how many jobs they expected to create.

Kennedy said similar protocols exist for other stimulus programs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Brazilian wins B.C. ski bum contest

A 29-year-old Brazilian has won a contest to be a B.C. ski bum, promoting the province's slopes to folks around the world. Thiago Lucene beat out 50 people from nine countries in the I Want to Be a Ski Bum promotion by Sun Peaks Resort. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Psychiatrist testifies in B.C. kids' deaths case

CRIME A psychiatrist who has worked on hundreds of court cases and parole board reviews says he has never heard a more disturbing account of killing than he heard from a B.C. father on trial for the murders of his three children.

Dr. Shabehram Lohrasbe testified yesterday that he interviewed Allan Schoenborn twice in jail this year. "I have to say it was one of the most painful interviews I've had to sit through. I've rarely heard a man describe in so much detail the killing of his children."

Lohrasbe said the account he was given of the murders was very close to Schoenborn's testimony earlier. In his chilling testimony on the witness stand, the 41-year-old father described how he slashed his daughter to death with a cleaver, and then suffocated his two boys. He then described writing messages in their home in blood.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bodies

• The bodies of 10-year-old Kaitlynne, eight-year-old Max and five-year-old Cordon were discovered by their mother in their Merritt, B.C., home April 6, 2008.

SHAMIL ZHUMATOV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian astronaut Robert Thirsk gestures yesterday as he rests inside a Russian Space Agency vehicle shortly after his landing near the town of Arkalyk in Kazakhstan.

Thirsk back on Earth

Canadian astronaut lands in Kazakhstan

A record-setting Canadian astronaut slept like a baby in the back of a heavy utility vehicle during his first few hours back on Earth, after returning yesterday from a six-month stay aboard the International Space Station.

The spacecraft carrying Bob Thirsk and two crewmates, Russian cosmonaut Roman Romanenko and Belgian Frank De Winne, landed upright in a field in northern Kazakhstan about 80 kilometres from the town of Arkalyk.

Helicopters that were supposed to carry recovery teams to the landing site were grounded because of low cloud cover and icy conditions at their base. Instead of an airlift, Thirsk had to wait for several heavy-duty vehicles to reach him.

"He (Thirsk) now has to relearn how to walk on the ground."
Benoit Marcotte, Canadian Space Agency

Dr. Jean-Marc Comtois, chief of the Canadian Astronaut Office, said it will take the 56-year-old spaceman weeks back on Earth before he gets used to gravity again. It may also take six months to one year before Thirsk's bone mass is back to normal.

Benoit Marcotte, director-general of the Canadian Space Agency, says every astronaut who goes to space has to pay that price. "He (Thirsk) now has to relearn how to walk on the ground and rebuild the strength of his legs."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Policy on Taser use changed, inquiry told

STUN GUN Halifax police say they are training officers to better defuse volatile situations with the mentally ill before having to resort to the use of a Taser, a fatality inquiry was told yesterday.

Sgt. Dean Stienburg, who trains police on the use of force, said the department is trying to equip officers with the skills to detect signs of mental illness and to de-escalate situations before having to deploy stun guns.

He said the force has changed its policies on mental health training since Howard Hyde, a 45-year-old musician with a long history of paranoid schizophrenia, died in custody 30 hours after being Tasered by police.

He said the force will change training guidelines next year to include emphasis on so-called empty-hand controls — or those that don't involve restraint devices — to restrain a person and avoid using a Taser.

They also plan to train dispatchers to recognize signs of mental health disorders when a 911 call is made and to deploy Emergency Health Services in such cases.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Background

• Howard Hyde was arrested two years ago following a complaint of domestic assault. He was taken to police headquarters, where he was Tasered after becoming agitated as officers tried to fingerprint him. He died the following day at a correctional facility. The medical examiner ruled the cause of death as excited delirium, linked to schizophrenia.

P.E.I. moves to restrict use of domestic lawn care pesticides

LEGISLATION P.E.I. is moving to restrict the use and sale of many domestic lawn care pesticides. Environment Minister Richard Brown introduced legislation that will ban about 240 end-use products.

In addition, the use of pesticides containing the active ingredient 2,4-D will be restricted to application on golf courses.

Brown says the intent is to stop the misuse and overuse of powerful lawn care chemicals.

The new act has been closely modelled after similar legislation in New Brunswick.

The program will go into effect April 1, 2010.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Alberta pumps $285M into synthetic gas
The Alberta government is putting up $285 million to turn coal into synthetic gas and capture carbon dioxide emissions. The province says the coal gas from an otherwise unminable bed near Swan Hills will be used to generate low-emissions electricity. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Critics boycott ceremony

MPs refuse to appear with minister at massacre anniversary

Opposition critics boycotted a non-partisan ceremony yesterday marking the 20th anniversary of the Dec. 6 l'Ecole Polytechnique massacre, saying they wouldn't stand alongside Helena Guergis, the Conservative status of women minister.

The Liberal, NDP and Bloc Québécois MPs who sit on the House of Commons status of women committee argued that Tory policies have rolled back the fight for women's equality and safety.

They pointed to the Conservative government's elimination of the court challenges program and to the move to abolish the gun registry — something that some Liberal and NDP members also support.

"We consider this (ceremony) a hypocritical gesture because her government has shown itself from the beginning to be hostile to all women's demands," said Bloc MP Nicole Demers.

The sombre ceremony in the House of Commons foyer was led by a senior bureaucrat from Status of Women Canada, and Guergis did not speak.

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Standing Committee on the Status of Women members Anita Neville, Lise Zarac and Irene Mathyssen look on as Nicole Demers responds to a question at a news conference in Ottawa yesterday.

About two dozen parliamentarians and staff, including NDP MP Libby Davies and Liberal MP Judy Sgro, placed 14 white roses in a vase to represent the 14 women gunned down in 1989.

House Speaker Peter Milliken and Senate Leader Noel Kinsella made brief remarks. The Bloc did not send a representative.

Guergis, who worked for seven years as a rape-crisis counsellor, called it "appalling" to suggest anyone in the Commons did not support ending violence against women.

"I would just like to think that there are some things in politics that are above partisan games," Guergis said.

She noted that she had asked her agency's officials to contact the families of the 14 women from Polytechnique to invite them to attend, but all declined as they had at the tenth anniversary.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Doctors slow to accept foreign credentials: Kenney

LABOUR Immigration Minister Jason Kenney is singling out doctors for not co-operating with federal efforts to speed up recognition of foreign credentials. However, the Canadian Medical Association disagrees, saying it is at the table and working on the issue.

The government announced a plan this week that would give some foreign-trained workers an answer within a year whether their credentials will be recognized in Canada. But the professions in the first phase of the framework includes only architects, engineers, pharmacists, physio and occupational therapists and registered nurses.

Kenney said the medical profession was reluctant to come to the table, despite the shortage of doctors in Canada.

Approval times

- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, the country's largest professional body representing doctors, says it already gives most foreign-trained doctors feedback on their credentials in four to six weeks, with more complex cases taking up to six months.

"Here we have a profession that is much in demand in Canada, and we have foreign trained doctors who are not given places to practice," he told the House of Commons immigration committee yesterday.

Doctors aren't scheduled to be included in the one-year recognition plan until the end of 2012.

The medical association says it's working on the question. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

TASER Vancouver International Airport has denied any responsibility for the death of Robert Dziekanski in a statement of defence to a lawsuit filed by his mother. Dziekanski died at the airport in October 2007 after four RCMP officers stunned the agitated man with a Taser, and his mother, Zofia Cisowski, is now suing the officers, the airport and the federal and provincial governments.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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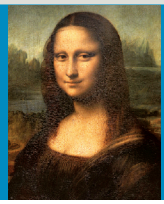
Baltimore mayor convicted of swiping gift cards donated for the poor

Baltimore's mayor has been convicted on a single charge of taking gift cards intended for the East Coast city's poor. Sheila Dixon was acquitted of three other charges yesterday, including felony theft. But the conviction of fraudulent misappropriation by a fiduciary could force her from office. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World



French museum workers to strike

Unions say French culture workers plan to strike today in a protest that could affect major museums and historical sites. Unions say the Louvre (home of the Mona Lisa, left), the Orsay Museum and the palace at Versailles could be hit, though the extent of possible disruption is not clear. Strikers are upset about government cost-cutting and a policy to not replace half of retiring public servants. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

30,000 troops Afghan-bound

U.S. President Barack Obama is dispatching 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan, accelerating a risky and expensive war buildup, even as he assures Americans that U.S. forces will begin coming home in July 2011. The first new Marines will join the fight by Christmas.

Obama unveiled yesterday evening his plans in a long-anticipated, high-profile speech broadcast from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, in what could become a defining moment of his presidency and a political gamble that may weigh on his chances for a second White House term.

It represents the beginning of a campaign to restore support for the war effort among an American public grown increasingly pessimistic — and among some fellow Democrats in Congress wary of spending billions more dollars and putting tens of thousands more U.S. soldiers and Marines in harm's way.

Obama

A Gallup poll released yesterday showed 55 per cent of Americans disapprove of Obama's handling of the war.

The buildup is expected to be completed by the summer. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korea revalues currency

FINANCE North Korea has revalued its currency for the first time in a half century, triggering chaos in the impoverished nation by moving to assert state control over a growing market economy.

North Korea revalued its currency — known as the won — at an exchange rate between old and new notes of 100 to 1, China's Xinhua news agency said. It cited a verbal notice yesterday from North Korea's Foreign Ministry to embassies in the capital. The exchange of old notes started Monday and will continue until Sunday, Xinhua reported.

The move reportedly sent shockwaves through North Korea, with reports of shops being closed and citizens angry and panicked. Residents rushed to black markets to convert stashed-away money into dollars and Chinese yuan, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported, citing unidentified North Korean traders operating in China. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AHN YOUNG-JOON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korean banknotes are displayed at a souvenir shop near the border village of the Panmunjom in South Korea yesterday.

Polish ombudsman orders H1N1 probe

HEALTH Poland's ombudsman has ordered an investigation into the government's refusal to import swine flu vaccines, calling it an "unacceptable" failure. Janusz Kochanowski said he requested the investigation yesterday. Prosecutors must now carry out preliminary fact-finding.

The government says the vaccine's producers refuse to take responsibility for possible side effects.

So far, there have been 1,158 confirmed cases of swine flu in Poland and 24 deaths. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Travel Jan 16/ac + taxes & fees $65

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Travel Jan 25 - Feb 1/aa + taxes & fees $113

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Travel Jan 28 - Feb 4/ts + taxes & fees $209

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CRUISE roundtrip Miami and Nassau & Great Stirrup Cay. Sails Jan 15/ncl.

Western Caribbean 7-Night Cruise $390
Norwegian Jewel + taxes & fees $128
CRUISE roundtrip Miami and visit Roatan, Belize, Costa Maya and Great Stirrup Cay. Sails Jan 17/ncl.

Mediterranean 7-Night Cruise $784
Norwegian Jade + taxes & fees $112
CRUISE roundtrip Barcelona and visit Monte Carlo, Florence/Livorno, Rome/Civitavecchia, Naples & Palma. Sails May 30/ncl.

Vacations

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Oasis Cairo and Nile Palace + taxes & fees $394
INCLUDES 3 nights in Cairo, 3 nights in Luxor, daily breakfast, Pyramid & Sphinx tour and half-day tour of the East Bank. Travel Jan 26 - Feb 1/ggv/os.

Zurich Air + First 2 Nights $699
Hotel Engimatt + taxes & fees $383
BONUS daily breakfast included. Travel Feb 1 - 9/ggv/ua. ADD 4-day consecutive Swiss Rail pass from $240.

Malaysia Air + 6 Nights $1399
Royal Bintang Kuala Lumpur and Hydro Majestic Hotel Penang + taxes & fees $250
INCLUDES all air, 2 nights in Kuala Lumpur and 4 nights in Penang. Travel Jan 26 - Feb 3/ggv/ac.

Thailand Beaches & Bangkok Air + 7 Nights $1399
Princess Larn Luang & Ibis Patong Phuket + taxes & fees $182
INCLUDES all air, daily breakfast, 3 nights in Bangkok and 4 nights in Phuket. Travel Feb 2 - 10/ggv/ua.
ADD Elephant Trekking in Phuket for $59.

New Zealand Auckland & Bay of Islands, Air + 7 Nights $1999
The Quadrant and Scenic Bay Island Hotel + taxes & fees $341
INCLUDES 4 nights in Auckland and 3 nights in Paihia, Bay of Islands. Departs Feb 8/ggv/nz.
ADD Auckland Bridge Climb for $107.

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Oasis Varadero 1920 + taxes & fees $205
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Grand Paradise Bavaro + taxes & fees $321
Departs Dec 6/nol/5g.

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RIU Guanacaste + taxes & fees $203
Departs Dec 14/sqv/5g.

Los Cabos 7 Nights 5-Star $597
RIU Santa Fe + taxes & fees $272
Departs Dec 10/sqv/5g.

Punta Cana Christmas 5 Nights 4-Star $765
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TICO

Sex offender indicted with murder: Attorney

A Cleveland sex offender who police say was living with 10 dead bodies has been indicted on 11 counts of aggravated murder, a prosecutor said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indonesia **World AIDS Day**

ACHMAD IBRAHIM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indonesian students hold lanterns yesterday during a rally to mark World AIDS Day in Jakarta.

South Africa boosts testing

South Africa will treat all HIV-positive babies and expand testing, the president announced yesterday, a dramatic and eagerly awaited shift in a country that has more people living with HIV than any other.

President Jacob Zuma's speech on World AIDS Day was viewed as a definitive turning point for a nation where the previous administration distrusted drugs developed to keep AIDS patients alive and instead promoted garlic treatments. One Harvard study said that resulted in more than 300,000 premature deaths.

Zuma compared the fight against AIDS to the decades-long struggle against the apartheid government.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. lends a hand

- In response to a plea from Jacob Zuma, the United States announced it was giving South Africa $120 million over the next two years for AIDS treatment drugs.

www.wlu.ca/mba

MBA INFORMATION SESSIONS

Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009 | noon & 5:30 p.m.
Laurier Toronto MBA Campus
St. Andrew's Club & Conference Centre
Sun Life Financial Tower | 150 King St. W., 27th floor

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Piracy patrol can't be 100% secure: Commander

International naval forces will never be able to completely secure the vast area of ocean where Somali pirates are hijacking ships off East Africa, the commander of the EU Naval Force's counter-piracy efforts said yesterday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'He stole my technique'

IF THE SHOE FITS, TOSS IT The Iraqi journalist who threw his shoes at former U.S. president George W. Bush in Baghdad last year had a taste of his own medicine yesterday when he nearly got beaned by a shoe thrower at a news conference in Paris.

Muntadhar al-Zeidi ducked and the shoe hit the wall behind him.

"He stole my technique," al-Zeidi later quipped.

The identity of the new shoe-thrower wasn't immediately clear, but he appeared to be an Iraqi.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No extension for West Bank housing freeze: PM

Israel's prime minister emphasized yesterday his 10-month freeze on new housing in the West Bank is a one-time measure that will not be extended.

Palestinians had rejected Benjamin Netanyahu's moratorium as inadequate, because it allows about 3,000 homes already under construction to be completed and does not include Jewish neighbourhoods in east Jerusalem, claimed by Palestinians as their future capital. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has demanded a comprehensive freeze before peace talks can resume.

Also yesterday, Israel sternly warned the European Union against adopting new language that endorses east Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

European Union

- The EU took a tentative step toward endorsing the Palestinian argument with a draft proposal referring to east Jerusalem as the capital of a state. In the past, the EU has said Jerusalem should be shared.

TED S. WARREN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police officers walk past the memorial at Lakewood police headquarters yesterday in Lakewood, Wash. Seattle police shot and killed a man yesterday who was accused of fatally shooting four Lakewood police officers Sunday as they sat in a coffee shop in Parkland, Wash.

Alleged cop killer gunned down

The man suspected of gunning down four police officers in a suburban coffee shop was shot and killed by a lone patrolman investigating a stolen car early yesterday.

Four people were arrested for allegedly helping the suspect elude authorities during a massive two-day manhunt.

Maurice Clemmons was carrying a handgun he took from one of the dead officers when a Seattle policeman recognized him near a stolen car in a working-class south Seattle neighbourhood about 2:45 a.m., assistant police Chief Jim Pugel said.

"He wouldn't stop. The officer fired several rounds."
Police Chief Jim Pugel

The vehicle was running, but unoccupied when the officer pulled up, radioed in the licence plate number and realized the car was stolen, Pugel said.

The officer saw something moving, got out of his car, saw Clemmons and ordered him to show his hands and stop.

"He wouldn't stop," Pugel said. "The officer fired several rounds."

Police planned to arrest more people who helped Clemmons.

"We expect to have maybe six or seven people in custody by the day's end," said Ed Troyer, a spokesman for the Pierce County sheriff.

"Some are friends, some are acquaintances, some are partners in crime, some are relatives. Now they're all partners in crime."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Freight ($1,330/$1,330/$1,330/$1,330/$1,325), license, insurance, registration, PPSA, administration fees and taxes are not included. Cash purchase price reflects discounts or other incentives that are only available when consumers opt for cash purchase offers. By selecting lease or finance offers consumers are foregoing such credit which will result in a higher effective interest rate. ‡Financing on approved GMAC credit only. 0% purchase financing for 36 months available on 2009/2010 Chevrolet Aveo/Cobalt. Example: $10,000 at 0% for 36 months, the monthly payment is $277.78. Cost of borrowing is $0, total obligation is $10,000. Down payment and/or trade may be required. Monthly payments may be higher or lower depending on applicable taxes. Offer may change or end without notice and may not be combined with other offers. Not all customers will qualify. Dealer may sell for less. ††Based on Consumers Digest Best Buy Rating for 2009 Chevrolet Aveo 1SM. ‡‡Based on Consumers Digest Best Buy Rating for 2010 Chevrolet Cobalt XFE Coupe. ◊2009 Natural Resources Canada Fuel Consumption Guide. 2010 ratings based on GM Testing in accordance with approved Transport Canada test methods. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. Excludes other GM models. △US government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program. For more information on safety ratings, go to www.safercar.gov. 2009 Chevrolet Aveo received a 5-star Rating for the driver and front passenger in the Frontal Crash Test. †† Chevrolet Traverse LTZ, MSRP $47,525. Chevrolet Cobalt LT Team Canada Edition, MSRP $19,305. Chevrolet Malibu LTZ, MSRP $32,255. ©The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications, LLC, used under license. ∀OnStar® services require vehicle electrical system (including battery), wireless service and GPS satellite signals to be available and operating for features to function properly. Subscription Service Agreement required. Call 1-888-4ONSTAR (1-888-466-7827) or visit onstar.ca for OnStar's Terms and Conditions, Privacy Statement and details and system limitations. ▽GMCL will pay the first two months' GMAC finance payments for finance terms up to 60 months only, paid up to a maximum monthly finance payment of $400 (tax included). Offer applicable to equal monthly payment finance agreements with GMAC and subject to GMAC credit approval. License, insurance, registration and administration fees not included and may be payable upon signing. Program not available to recipients of any previous GM student/graduate offer. 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Vehicle must be eligible under the "Retire Your Ride" program. GM Canada will provide an incentive towards the purchase or lease of a new 2009 or 2010 GM vehicle, excluding Medium Duty trucks, in an amount ranging from $500 to $3,000, depending on the model purchased. Incentive applied after taxes. If you successfully complete the "Retire Your Ride" program, you will be eligible for a $300 cash incentive. By participating in this program you will not be eligible for any trade-in value for your vehicle. GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive is only available to customers who take delivery between November 3, 2009 and January 4, 2010. GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers offer may not be combined with certain other incentives available on GM vehicles, including the 60 Day Satisfaction Guarantee. See your participating GM dealer for additional program conditions and details. 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Research director quits
A director of research at Britain's University of East Anglia is stepping down over allegations he overstated the case for man-made climate change. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Skeptics 'confused'

Hackers have muddled debate: Expert

A leading British climate change economist warned yesterday that those who doubt the science of global warming are confused — and said their skepticism should not derail efforts to strike a climate deal in Denmark.

Nicholas Stern, who wrote a British government report on global warming, said hackers who posted documents snatched from the climate research unit at the University of East Anglia had muddled the debate at a critical moment.

Critics of the science behind global warming argue the hacked documents show academics manipulated data to strengthen their argument backing the phenomenon.

Stern said if countries did not reach agreement, world temperatures could rise by 5 C by the end of the century, making much of the world uninhabitable.

Some of the scientists whose private emails were stolen by hackers have said they believe those who leaked the documents had deliberately tried to undermine the 192-nation conference in Copenhagen next week.

Kevin Trenberth, of the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado, has said he believes the hackers distributed only those documents that could help attempts by skeptics to undermine the scientific consensus on man-made climate change.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PAVEL GOLOVKIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The International Union of Railways representative, Margaret Sagevik, one of the participants of the international "Train to Copenhagen" project, leaves a special Russian Railways carriage yesterday at a railway terminal in Moscow. The group of international climate experts travelled to Moscow from Vladivostok, from where they will travel to Copenhagen to attend the COP15 United Nations Climate Change Conference.

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Tuesday, December 8, 2009

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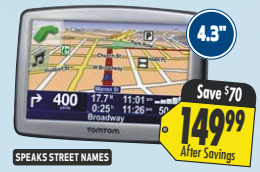

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No purchase necessary. Gift cards are good towards in-store and online purchases in Canada only and have no cash value. Winner must be present at time of draw and will be required to correctly answer a skill-testing question. Contest open to residents of Canada who have reached the age of majority in their province. Odds of winning depend on the number of entrants. See complete details in-store. One (1) Gift Card will be given away per store per day. Random draw will take place on Friday and Saturday at about 8:45am and on Sunday at about 9:45am. Not valid at Best Buy Mobile stores.

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THE WHITE HOUSE-SAMANTHA APPLETON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama greets Michaele and Tareq Salahi at a state dinner for Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the White House in this photo released by the White House Nov. 27.

Couple denies gatecrashing

White House says no invite

The couple who got into the White House state dinner for the visiting Indian prime minister without invitations denied yesterday they were gatecrashers.

Appearing on a nationally broadcast morning news show with his wife, Tareq Salahi said the furor surrounding his and his wife Michaele's attendance at the dinner a week ago has been a "most devastating" experience. White House spokesman Robert Gibbs described U.S. President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama as angered by the incident.

Salahi told NBC's Today show there's more to their side of the story — an explanation that would exonerate them from allegations of misconduct in the breach of White House security. Appearing on the same program, Gibbs insisted the Salahis had not been invited.

Muriel Cooper, a spokeswoman for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, meanwhile said the Salahis had been escorted out of a foundation dinner Sept. 26. She said the couple was sitting at a $20,000-per-table section at the event where Obama was the keynote speaker.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

YACHT Iran warned yesterday that it will prosecute five British sailors if it is proven they had "bad intentions" when their 60-foot racing yacht entered its waters, in what Britain says was an innocent case of a vessel accidentally going astray in the Gulf. The vessel was on its way to Dubai from Bahrain last Wednesday for an off-shore race when it had a problem with its propeller, according to Andrew Pindar, whose Team Pindar owns the yacht. It drifted into Iranian waters and was seized.

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Comment

Channels of thought

CRTC approves Al Jazeera English cable application

TheWestView

Paul Sullivan

metronews.ca/thewestview

It looks as if Al Jazeera is coming to a TV near you. Maybe as close as your living room, if you have cable.

Last week, the CRTC approved Al Jazeera English (AJE), the Qatar-based English-language version of the most popular news network in the Muslim world, and the cable companies are lining up to carry the signal.

This is in marked contrast to the last round, in 2003, when its sister network, AJA (Al Jazeera Arab), tried for a licence in Canada and was vigorously opposed. This time, there were 2,600 submissions to the CRTC in favour. What a difference a few years makes.

I don't know if, as Al Jazeera claims, that the AJE and AJA are really two different organizations. I mean, really. But according to the CRTC, AJE "will expand the diversity of editorial points of view in the Canadian broadcasting system." And we're all for that.

Of course, if you stop to think about it for a minute, that seems to imply that there is no one standard, grade-A version of the truth, and the only way we can snag that elusive commodity is to net it with a diversity of editorial points of view.

If news organizations such as Al Jazeera (and to be fair, Fox News, the BBC, Global, NBC, CBC, etc.) were all as objective as they claim to be, wouldn't they all be broadcasting the same, true stories?

And how far will we go with this diversity of editorial opinion notion? If TTVN (Taliban TV Network) wanted access to the nation's living rooms, how would the CRTC respond?

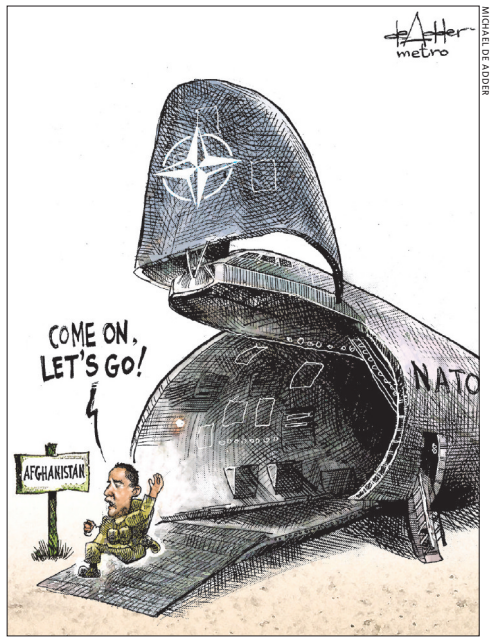
Let me point out quickly that I'm pretty much in favour of the AJE application. I know its managing director Tony Burman pretty well. We used to work together at the CBC and spent many shifts trying to figure what to put on or what not to put on The Journal. There was nothing in his demeanour to indicate terrorist tendencies. Once in a while he got a little grumpy, but that might have been the takeout we were forced to consume.

Still, if objectivity and truth exist totally in the eye of the beholder, will we ever really have any basis for agreement?

This problem is nothing new. In fact, it originated in the Middle East, even before the invention of television. It was called the Tower of Babel: Mass confusion, 24/7.

Is it really so different today?

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting; vancouverletters@metronews.ca.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Word on the street: Who do you support in the cable TV vs. local broadcaster debate?

Hamish Broadwater
Toronto

A: I support the local broadcasters ... I think it's appalling that the CRTC said the cable companies and satellite companies are going to charge us $10 more a month ... I mean we pay enough already.

Erica Woods
Toronto

A: I think that both cable channels and network channels are greedy ... Cable is fairly expensive already, so this is price gouging. I agree with neither.

Patrick Peters
Toronto

A: Local broadcasters ... I've done my homework, I've called the CRTC, and based on the information given to me, the onus should not go on the consumer either.

Mary Jones
Bedford, N.S.

A: I really feel strongly we have to keep local TV. I think they should get the money support from the government.

Orri Sachar
Vancouver

A: To be honest Canadian TV isn't all that important to me. I don't watch it much myself so I wouldn't pay extra. I don't really support bailing out cable stations that made mistakes along the road.

Melissa Etherington
Edmonton

A: Local TV because I think that cable TV is like a big company and that it's just like water, how they try to commercialize it. I think that cost will go up and I like to stay local.

Letters

Finch community offers more positives than negatives

Re: Is this the new Finch? (Nov. 23)

We would like to address the heading of this article and address the potential implications that this quote may cause to the "Finch" community.

Upon reading this article, the first thing that came to our minds was, "not another stereotype for this community." The community has been working for many years to erase the past oppressions and idealisms that society has placed on it in the past.

These comments and headings continue to perpetuate negative beliefs about this community — they are also insensitive and inconsiderate, and affect people who live in this community.

A community does not murder people, guns do.

It is obvious that Finch is not the upscale glorious Bay Street, housing business or "Toronto's best" people. But it seems as though whenever we hear "Finch" people idealize this community as a war-torn community that is bent on criminalization. In fact, this community represents one of Toronto's most diverse and multicultural communities. Little do people know or realize that this community has more positives than negatives.

MONIQUE BURSEY AND GREGORY LESLIE, TORONTO

Salaries for some TTC operators called 'atrocious'

Re: Letter to the editor (Nov. 20)

I was reading Bob Kinnear's letter to the editor about not taking our TTC frustrations on operators and collectors and I was awestruck at the audacity of the public plea.

If you look up the Public Sector Salary Disclosure 2009 (Disclosure for 2008), you will find there are 63 TTC operators and 42 station collectors whose salaries are more than $100,000. For jobs that anyone can learn in three weeks, that's atrocious.

Those 105 employees account for at least $10.5 million for the TTC and the public to dole out. The vast majority of the people who depend on the TTC do not make even remotely close to $100,000 a year.

HENRY CHEN, TORONTO

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$3,000	$97

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Monthly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Freight and taxes are not included for bi-weekly payment. Bi-weekly payments based on a purchase price of $13,778/$15,648/$17,498 with $0/$1,000/$3,000 down payment. ♦♦♦7'2 Offers apply as indicated to the purchase of 2008 and 2010 new or demonstrator models of the vehicle equipped as described. Offers apply to qualified retail customers in the Ontario Pontiac Buick GMC Dealer Marketing Association area only (excluding Outaouais). Dealer order or trade may be required. Dealers are free to sell individual prices. Limited time offer which may not be combined with other offers. See your dealer for conditions and details. ♣Based on 2009 Natural Resources Canada Fuel Consumption Guide. 2010 ratings based on GM testing in accordance with approved Transport Canada test methods. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. 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General Motors CEO Henderson steps down

General Motors Co. CEO Frederick "Fritz" Henderson stepped down yesterday after the board determined that the company wasn't changing quickly enough. The resignation comes just eight months after Henderson, 51, replaced ousted former chairman and CEO Rick Wagoner. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Business in brief

REDEMPTION Telus Corp. announced yesterday it plans a partial early redemption of $1.95 billion in notes issued in 2001. The notes, which it issued in May 2001, are due June 1, 2011.

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Barrick axes its gold hedges

GOLD Barrick Gold Corp. has eliminated all of its gold hedges ahead of schedule, the world's largest gold producer said yesterday.

The news sent Barrick's shares up by $3.55 or 7.9 per cent to $48.41 in afternoon trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The hedges had limited Barrick's ability to take advantage of rising gold prices, although they also were designed to protect the company from lower prices. Barrick announced in September it would eliminate all its gold hedges within 12 months.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Germany **Christmas rush**

MARTIN MEISSNER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People walk into the city centre of Dortmund, Germany, for Christmas shopping yesterday. Germany's highest court has ruled that shops must remain closed on Sundays, overturning legislation that allowed stores to open seven days a week.

TSX surges to highest close

Dubai concerns fading away

The Toronto stock market surged to its highest close of the year as worries about Dubai's credit problems receded and American economic reports reinforced the impression a rebound is underway.

The S&P/TSX composite index jumped 260.12 points to 11,707.32.

The gain left the Toronto index up 30.25 per cent year to date.

Investors felt more confident the Dubai debt crisis will be contained, almost a week after the emirate shocked markets when it said its investment arm, Dubai World, wanted to postpone payments on its approximately $60 billion US of debt for at least six months. But investors felt better about the Dubai issue after the Persian Gulf emirate's government-owned conglomerate, Dubai World, said that it had begun "constructive" discussions with its creditors over $26 billion US of its debt.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Boxmaker plans to reorganize
Smurfit-Stone Container Corp., the largest producer of cardboard box materials in North America, said it has filed a reorganization plan. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Automaker sales jump from last year

Toyota, Hyundai report records for November

Canadian sales for many automakers jumped in November, due in large part to the fact that last November was when the industry — and the economy — collapsed.

But big jumps in car sales numbers weren't due solely to year-over-year comparisons — Toyota and Hyundai both reported record sales for the month of November, a sign that consumers are increasingly willing to spend money on big-ticket items like cars.

Toyota Canada said yesterday that it sold 14,829 vehicles in November, up 27.4 per cent from a year earlier. This boost was led by truck sales, which were up 54.1 per cent. The luxury Lexus division sold 1,283 vehicles, up 11.4 per cent to its best November on record.

26.2 The percentage Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. reported it was up from a year earlier.

Meanwhile, Hyundai is quickly distinguishing itself as an able competitor with the five companies that traditionally lead the pack in terms of Canadian market share — General Motors, Chrysler, Ford, Honda and Toyota.

Ford — which set itself apart from its North American competitors by neither filing for bankruptcy protection nor asking for government bailout money earlier this year — also saw a positive November, although its sales increase wasn't as dramatic as in previous months.

Ford Canada said its sales were up 7.5 per cent in November, its sixth consecutive month of sales gains.

The vehicles built at Ford's Oakville plant — which include the Lincoln MKX, Ford Edge and Ford Flex — saw their sales improve by 25 per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Illinois Supplies in demand

SETH PERLMAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In this August photo, shoppers browse the aisles looking for supplies at the Staples Office Supply store in Springfield, Ill. Staples Inc. provided an upbeat view of its prospects yesterday.

Growth will be sluggish: Bank

ECONOMY Scotiabank's chief economist says North American economic growth will be sluggish in the coming months as the global economy struggles to get a recovery off the ground.

Warren Jestin told an economic conference yesterday that inventory adjustments, particularly in the auto sector, will drive growth as companies ramp up production.

Jestin warned that developed economies could risk weakening again as stimulus packages start to run their course.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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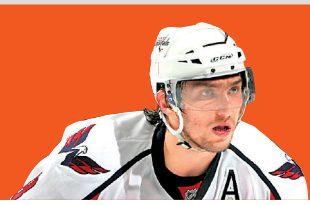
Bruins lock up Savard

Marc Savard is staying put in Boston for a while. The Bruins have signed the centre to a seven-year contract extension that will keep him with the club through the 2016-17 season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports



Ovechkin suspended

Washington Capitals star Alex Ovechkin, left, has been suspended for two games for a knee-on-knee hit on Carolina defenceman Tim Gleason Monday. Ovechkin hurt his knee in the hit and was pronounced "day-to-day" by the Capitals yesterday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Sports in brief

NHL The NHL board of governors has approved the sale of the Montreal Canadiens to the Molson family. Geoff Molson and his brothers, Andrew and Justin, are the lead investors in a group that is paying a reported $575 million US for the storied franchise. George Gillett put the team up for sale in the spring.

NBA Allen Iverson and the Philadelphia 76ers are closer to a reunion. A person with knowledge of the contract talks says the Sixers offered a one-year, non-guaranteed contract to Iverson yesterday.

FOOTBALL Florida State coach Bobby Bowden will end his 44-year coaching career after the Seminoles play in a bowl game. Bowden, 80, will retire as the second winningest coach in major-college football behind Penn State's Joe Paterno.

NFL Steelers wide receiver Hines Ward apologized yesterday for openly questioning Ben Roethlisberger's toughness, saying he spoke emotionally without knowing a team doctor recommended the quarterback not play Sunday because of a concussion.

BASEBALL Former Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Scott Schoeneweis' wife died from an overdose of cocaine and an anaesthetic, lidocaine, an appellate court disclosed in a ruling released yesterday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

METRO HOCKEY POOL STANDINGS*

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NAME	LOCATION	GP	G	A	PTS
1. Joanne Doiron	NB, CA	374	162	228	390
2. Steve Ferguson	ON, CA	378	162	222	384
3. Christian Gagnon	NB, CA	377	163	220	383
3. Kyle Turk	NS, CA	378	179	204	383
5. Rick Kit	ON, CA	376	168	207	375
6. Shawn Tschritter	AB, CA	375	158	213	371
7. Jean-Paul Osborne	QC, CA	367	157	212	369
7. Matty Strathearn	NS, CA	372	161	208	369
7. Tom Collier	NS, CA	375	168	201	369
10. Lorne Willmott	ON, CA	354	163	205	368
11. Cole Warren	NS, CA	379	137	230	367
12. B Fillmore	BC, CA	372	136	228	364
12. Brian B	AB, CA	377	161	203	364
12. Derrick Yee		365	150	214	364
12. Kelly Wrishko	AB, CA	376	154	210	364

** Results exclude Quebec*

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metro

Wizards top Raptors

NBA

Wizards 106 Raptors 102

WIZARDS AT RAPTORS

Antawn Jamison scored 30 points and added 12 rebounds as the Washington Wizards beat Toronto 106-102 last night, sending the Raptors to their fourth loss in a row.

Gilbert Arenas had 22 points and nine rebounds while Caron Butler added 19 points and seven rebounds in his 500th career NBA game to pace the Wizards (6-10). Brendan Haywood chipped in with 15 points and nine rebounds as Washington won for the third time in four games.

Chris Bosh scored 18 of his 22 points in the second quarter and added 14 rebounds for the Raptors (7-12), who lost for the eighth time in the past 10 games. And just like in every other loss during that string, Toronto was undone by an uneven second-half performance in front of 15,776 at the Air Canada Centre.

Coming into the game, the Raptors had been outscored in the second half in nine straight games, going 2-7 over that span. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Raptor Marco Belinelli tries to keep the ball away from Washington Wizard Antawn Jamison last night. The Wizards won 106-102.

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

TORONTO 3 Montreal 0
Columbus at Chicago
Los Angeles at Anaheim
Ottawa at San Jose

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Boston 108 Charlotte 90
Washington 106 TORONTO 102
Phoenix at New York
Golden State at Denver
Miami at Portland.
New Orleans at L.A. Lakers

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Leafs win; Gustavsson sent to hospital

Toronto goaltender Jonas Gustavsson had to be taken to hospital after the first period with a heart issue, but Joey MacDonald stepped in and made 18 saves to complete the Maple Leafs' first shutout of the season last night in a 3-0 win over the Montreal Canadiens.

Gustavsson was pulled from the game after stopping all eight shots he faced in the first and taken to hospital with an elevated heart rate.

He had a similar problem in the pre-season and had an ablation, a common medical procedure among athletes. The Leafs say he was taken to hospital as a precaution.

Colton Orr, Jeff Finger and Matt Stajan scored for the Leafs (7-12-7), who have earned 10 of a possible 14 points over their last seven games (4-1-2).

Phil Kessel added two assists for Toronto, giving him four points in his last three games.

Carey Price made 28 saves in his ninth straight start in goal for the Canadiens (12-13-2), who generated very little offensively in spite of the return from injury of centre Scott Gomez and winger Matt D'Agostini.

But when Montreal did manage to generate some pressure, MacDonald was there to foil them to earn his first win of the season.

The Canadiens are winless in three games (0-2-1) and have scored only four goals over that span.

The Leafs jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first on goals from two very unlikely sources.

Orr opened the scoring at 9:24 with his first since Dec 10, 2008. Finger, playing his first game after missing four with an injury, made it 2-0 at 12:51 when his harmless looking shot from the side boards fooled Price.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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370

Falcons release kicker Elam

The Atlanta Falcons have released kicker Jason Elam. Elam, a 17-year veteran and one of the league's most accurate kickers, missed only two kicks last season, his first with the Falcons. But he struggled this year, making only eight of 15 field goal attempts from at least 30 yards. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sophomore jinx? Yes. Bust? Not yet

Struggling Maple Leafs defenceman Luke Schenn is too young to be counted out

TheHockeyNews

One year ago, Luke Schenn was on top of the NHL world — and on the cover of The Hockey News' annual rookie report issue.

Today, he wouldn't likely even merit consideration to be one of the answers in our magazine's crossword section.

Things can change quickly for young players. That said, does Schenn's reversal of fortune officially make him the latest in a long line of failed, high-profile Maple Leafs blueline prospects?

Hardly. He's simply going through the kind of second-year struggles most NHLers endure, only he's doing so in the biggest fishbowl pro hockey has to offer.

Always billed as a stay-at-home defenceman, Schenn is the type of player who will never work himself into the good graces of fans with dazzling offensive manoeuvres. However, any time he makes a mistake, millions of people will notice, because more likely than not — especially with the sub-standard goaltending the Leafs have received this year — Schenn's error will lead to an opposition goal.

It's understandable, then, why the 20-year-old is sticking out for the wrong reasons, as well as why coach Ron Wilson has scaled back Schenn's ice time (to 14:50 this year from an average of 21:32 minutes per game last year) as he battles the sophomore jinx.

But if you're training your vocal chords to boo the kid for the rest of his days in a Leafs uniform, look at the career of Avs defenceman Adam Foote, someone people liken to Schenn, before you commit to the catcalls.

"... If you're training your vocal chords to boo the kid for the rest of his days in a Leafs uniform, look at the career of Avs defenceman Adam Foote."

When Foote played his first NHL game in 1991, he was a 20-year-old on an awful Quebec Nordiques squad and finished the year with a minus-four plus/minus rating in 46 games.

Four years after that — and once the Nords franchise developed its young talent after relocating to Colorado to become the Avalanche — Foote was a plus-27 on a Stanley Cup championship team.

There's no assurance Schenn will follow the same career path.

But assuming he is a bust of a high draft pick ignores the history before him — and the potential he still has.

The Hockey News thn.com

Venezuelan scouting among Jays' priorities

Meeting with the Toronto chapter of the Baseball Writers' Association of America yesterday afternoon, Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos laid out more of the club's plans.

They include renewed emphasis on scouting in Venezuela, even as other clubs downsize operations in the South American nation. They also include a yearlong search for a replacement for manager Cito Gaston, who has already announced that he will join the Jays' front office after the 2010 season.

But they don't include catcher Rod Barajas or shortstop Marco Scutaro. The club offered arbitration to both players yesterday afternoon.

Both Scutaro and Barajas have already filed for free agency, and technically either can accept the offer of arbitration then have an arbitrator determine how much the club should pay them.

Barajas made $2.5 million last season, batting .226 with 19 homers and 71 RBIs. Scutaro, meanwhile, blossomed in his first year as a full-time starter, scoring 100 runs while batting .282 and drawing 90 walks, ranking him seventh in the league. For his career-best season, Scutaro earned $1.1 million.

But in the real world, the offer of arbitration is a formality. The Jays expect Scutaro and Barajas to reject the offer, allowing the team to collect draft picks as compensation when either man signs with a new club.

Speaking to reporters yesterday, Anthopoulos wouldn't say definitively that the Jays no longer wanted Scutaro and Barajas.

Asked who the team's starting catcher would be if the season began immediately, Anthopoulos replied the Jays didn't have one. He mentioned backup Raul Chavez, but acknowledged the Venezuelan veteran isn't suited for full-time duty. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Awards

- Ace right-hander Roy Halladay extended his club record by being named Blue Jays pitcher of the year for a seventh time yesterday in voting by the Toronto chapter of the Baseball Writers' Association of America.
- Second baseman Aaron Hill was named the team's most valuable player.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Self-govern or face contentious zoning bylaw, Vancouver warns UBC
Metro Vancouver is warning the University of British Columbia that if it will not take responsibility for its own governance, the city will impose a contentious zoning bylaw, reports the Vancouver Sun. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Downturn hits Alberta trades

Shifting demographics and the recession are affecting staff levels among construction trades, which will likely affect apprenticeship enrolments at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, say industry and school officials. Even as ground clearing is underway for the $445-million Trades and Technology Complex at SAIT, officials say a decline is likely in the number of students applying to trades programs. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Workology in **brief**

FORMER MP NAME INTERIM UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT: New Brunswick's St. Thomas University's board of governors has appointed Dennis Cochrane as the institution's interim president and vice-chancellor, effective January 2010. A graduate of the University of New Brunswick and the Université de Moncton, Cochrane was mayor of Moncton from 1979-83, and an MP from 1984-88. He was elected leader of N.B.'s PC party in 1991 and was an MLA, roles he served in until 1995. Cochrane has also served as the deputy minister of education in N.B. and Nova Scotia. Cochrane succeeds Michael Higgins, who announced his resignation in August. Cochrane will serve as STU president until July 1, 2011, at which time a president will be in place following a search process. METRO NEWS SERVICES

'Tis the season to give back

'Tis the **Season**

Over the next few weeks Metro's Workology section will be shining a light on some of the jobs that pop up around the holiday season and disappear just as quickly afterwards. Check back every Wednesday.

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

As the holiday season revs up, children's charities swing into gear as well, hoping to provide toys, hope and a lot of joy to kids in the greatest need.

Across Canada, the Children's Wish Foundation takes aim at making kids' dreams literally come true by fulfilling their personal wishes, no matter what they may be. The organization works with donors, and volunteers to fulfill requests from eligible kids between the ages of three and 17 who are diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses.

Paul St-Germain, a director at the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada, says that after 25 years of fulfilling wishes for children, the people involved with Children's Wish know one thing is for certain: Kids' wish requests are as creative and varied as they are.

Disney World visits and celebrities meet-ups top the list, such as the case of one girl with Leukemia who wanted to meet Robin Williams — she did, handing him a hand-drawn collage of all the animated characters he's ever voiced while Williams spent the day with her in between film takes.

From one girl in Manitoba who dreamed of having her own white horse to a young boy on the East Coast who's only wish was to have his grandparents be able to move closer to him from Edmonton, kids have come up with some real doozies and Children's Wish has made sure to follow through.

We're dedicated to working within the community to let children with life threatening illnesses to realize their most heartfelt wish."
Children's Wish Foundation's Paul St-Germain

"Each wish is a unique as the child who wishes it — no two wishes are the same. We're dedicated to working within the community to let children with life threatening illnesses to realize their most heartfelt wish," St-Germain said.

The organization fills about 900 wish requests each year across Canada and St-Germain says the joy a fulfilled wish brings affects not only the kids and their families but the volunteers and donors who make it all possible as well.

"The benefit is almost immeasurable. (A fulfilled wish) helps not only the children cope with the illness but the family as a whole to reconnect and focus on something other than the illness. It's life-changing both for the children and families and the people who participate in doing it," St-Germain said.

For kids whose families are enduring hard times, joys of the toy variety can be few and far between and toy drives throughout the country try to provide kids with a little bit of playtime joy.

In Toronto, the Salvation Army and CTV Toronto's annual Toy Mountain campaign has been a staple for 14 years and this year hopes to top 110,000 donated toys. Reaching the goal would mean filling an entire warehouse almost to the roof with toys and John Murray, spokesperson for the Salvation Army, says seeing last year's finished mountain — the organization's best-ever haul of more than 100,000 toys — was an amazing experience.

"It's tremendously rewarding to be able to know you're providing a sense of joy to kids — it's incredible." Murray said.

Similar toy drives are supported by the Salvation Army throughout the country and Murray says anyone can have a hand in making a child's Christmas a happy one.

To help contribute toys or volunteer with the Salvation Army, visit salvationarmy.ca or call 1-800-SALARMY.

To help make a child's wish come true with the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada, visit catalogueofwishes.ca to view a virtual catalogue of wishes and help contribute things or help volunteer.

Last year, the Salvation Army of Toronto collected more than 100,000 toys for disadvantaged children. They are aiming for more than 110,000 this year.

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More on performance reviews
Although remedial, negative performance appraisals usually contemplate corrective discipline, which may eventually support the employer's case for dismissal. Therefore, ask for sufficient time and support to correct any alleged deficiency. DANIEL LUBLIN/FOR METRO CANADA

Performance appraisals can cut both ways

Being dismissed for underperformance is not an easy task! Court cases clearly state that employers owe a duty to provide employees with the opportunity and means required to improve underperformance if being dismissing without pay for that reason. Judges require that employers prove an employee was grossly incompetent, and that progressive warnings were issued, clearly identifying areas of concern.

Therefore, employers seeking to dismiss their habitual underperformer usually follow a prescription for a tidy divorce: Create a paper trail documenting any and all allegations and concerns. Typically, this is accomplished by a series of negative performance appraisals. Employees, therefore, ought to consider the following response:

- Document your response to a challenged appraisal in writing and request that the response be placed alongside the appraisal in your human resource file.
- Performance appraisals should be remedial in nature. Point out that the standards expected are not objectively reasonable, are beyond your capability, were never communicated, or suitable instruction and supervision were never given.
- Express bewilderment if there is any marked inconsistency with previous positive appraisals or accomplishments.
- State that prior to the appraisal, the alleged shortcoming was never verbalized and, as far as understood, you were just following the procedures or protocol in place.

FOR THE FULL COLUMN, SEE METRONEWS.CA/WORKPLACELAW

WorkplaceLaw

Daniel Lublin

Metronews.ca/workplacelaw

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer with Whitten & Lublin LLP. Reach him at dan@toronto-employmentlawyer.com.

See some bullying in the Den

Dragons' Den

Dianne Buckner

metronews.ca/dragonsden

Claire Copp stands up to one of the Dragons in tonight's episode.

It takes two to tango. And you could say the same about workplace bullying. There has to be a bully, someone using their power or personality to intimidate a co-worker or subordinate — but there also has to be a 'victim' to accept that unfair treatment.

I found myself thinking about this after seeing tonight's episode of Dragons' Den. A woman gets flamed by the Dragons, and it reminded me of the time a pitcher complained to me that she felt she'd been bullied in the Den.

It's true that the Dragons are rich and powerful, and that they are sometimes very critical of the entrepreneurs who are asking for investment — but who wouldn't ask plenty of tough questions when asked to hand over hundreds of thousands of dollars? It's the Dragons' own money these people want.

Even so, sometimes, it's difficult to watch rookies go head-to-head with true pros. The powerful vs. powerless dynamic can appear to be akin to bullying.

But who is truly powerless? Tonight Claire Copp from Abbotsford, B.C., stands up to Kevin O'Leary as he attacks her business plan. ("Ooh, I like her now," says Dragon Robert Herjavec, in praise of her spirit). Randy Thompson of Victoria, B.C. fought fire with fire earlier in the season, calling Kevin a variety of nasty names when he criticized Randy's board game.

Anyone can do that — the show has no rules about how the Dragons and pitchers have to interact.

But it's not easy to take on someone who seems bigger and stronger. And sadly when it comes to the workplace, bullying isn't uncommon.

Most experts advise people with bullying colleagues to consult a trusted mentor. Often someone older and more experienced can offer ideas about how to react in tense situations.

If confrontation feels too dangerous or distressing, and if you work in company with a Human Resources department, someone there may be able to intervene on your behalf, and mediate.

In any work environment though, the key is to recognize that you are a valuable contributor, and that no one has a right to intimidate you. If you can draw on the strength of that knowledge, you can simply refuse to be drawn into a bullying scenario.

It takes two, after all.

Dianne Buckner is the host of Dragons' Den and the weekend anchor on the CBC News Network. Watch Dragons' Den at 8 p.m. tonight on CBC.

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A new online brochure is available for Canadian drivers, giving the facts about winter driving and the advantages of winter tires. The brochure is available at the tire industry's tire education website, Be Tire Smart. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Metro Drive

Things of beauty

Award-winning car writer and design critic Stephen Bayley explores the 86 most beautiful cars ever produced in his latest book Cars: Freedom, Style, Sex, Power, Motion, Colour, Everything. The jaw-dropping black-and-white photos of the cars are alone worth the hefty $80 price tag. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

Acura ZDX: Road thrill

PETER BLEAKNEY
for Metro Canada

2010 Acura ZDX

Type: Luxury crossover
Price: from $55,990
Engine: 3.7L SOHC V6
HP: 300
Torque: 270 lb-ft

Highlights

- Athletic performance
- Impressive interior
- Built in Canada

This month, Acura is launching its bravely styled new brand leader, the 2010 ZDX crossover. Like the BMW X6, this similarly profiled soft-roader unabashedly advertises its form over function. Unlike the four place Bimmer, the ZDX will seat five, but it doesn't have as much cargo capacity as the compact Honda Fit.

Fine. So Acura's new luxury crossover will be an emotional, right brain purchase. In that context, it's a pretty cool rig.

Acura's new grinning metallic grill looks most at home here, parked on the front of this intriguing wedge with the origami edges and all-glass roof. With "hidden" rear door handles and an extreme fast-back profile, it tricks the eye into thinking it's a two-door vehicle.

The ZDX is built in Alliston, Ont., along side the Acura MDX, from which it gets its platform and most mechanicals.

The ZDX is built in Alliston, Ont., along side the Acura MDX, from which it gets its platform and most mechanicals. The interior features an organic flow of curves and top-shelf materials.

Motivation comes from the MDX's 300 hp 270 lb-ft 3.7L SOHC V6 hooked to an all-new six-speed auto with paddle shifters. It also shares the MDX's SH-AWD (super handling all wheel drive) with torque vectoring rear differential that overdrives the outside rear wheel when cornering.

The Acura MDX is certainly one of the more athletic full-sized SUVs, so it's no surprise the ZDX takes this altheticism a step further with its lower centre of gravity and reduced curb weight.

Over the twisty canyon roads of our test loop, this four-door SUV/CUV coupe thingy never put a wheel wrong. While you can't feel the active diff working, you know it is because of the ZDX's quick turn in and fluidity through the bends. Suspension tuning finds a good balance between body control and comfort and the hydraulic steering has good feel

The ZDX's interior is the nicest effort I've seen from this company, featuring an organic flow of concave and convex curves and top-shelf materials. Hand-sewn full-grain leather covers the lower sweep of the dash, door panels and seats.

Standard is a three-view rear view camera, powered tailgate, heated rear seats and headlight washers. The cabin is quieted by cancelling frequencies sent forth from the audio system.

Tall folks in the back seat will find their pompadours perilously close to the scooped out headliner.

No surprise there. The nicely appointed cargo area is designed to hold four sets of golf clubs though, so at least the passengers will have something to look forward to.

For more reviews of the latest cars, visit:
metronews.ca/autoreviews

The Autonomous Audi TTS quattro is a unique prototype 'driverless' TTS quattro using 'drive by wire' technology.

Over the hills and far away without a driver

Audi is set to return to a venue synonymous with its past motorsport successes when a "driverless" TTS Coupe quattro tackles the infamous Pikes Peak Hill Climb in the U.S.

The non-competitive "drive" would be 30 years after the German manufacturer's quattro permanent four-wheel-drive technology first appeared.

The Autonomous Audi TTS Coupé quattro is the direct result of work underway at the Volkswagen Group Automotive Innovation Laboratory (VAIL) — a collaborative effort set up by the Volkswagen Group Electronics Research Laboratory and Stanford University USA to advance car technology.

Currently in the testing phase, the Autonomous Audi TTS quattro is being developed for several still-to-be determined real-world driving challenges in 2010.

The project is not aimed at making motorists, or the thrill of driving, dispensable.

Instead, it is intended to explore the best capabilities of current and future driver assistance technologies to help Audi enhance the experience behind the steering wheel for future driver generations.

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Caddy debuts CTS Coupe

Cadillac has unveiled the 2011 CTS Coupe, a new luxury sports coupe designed to become the centre of the brand's revised lineup. The new model is scheduled to go on sale in spring 2010. **CANADIANDRIVER.COM**

March of Millennials

AutoPilot
Michael Goetz
metronews.ca/autopilot

In preparation for the North American launch of the Fiesta at the L.A. auto show today, Ford did extensive research on Millennials — people who are reaching driving age in the Twitter era.

The Millennials are coming! They're coming over the hills, armed with newly minted driving licenses, numerous texting and music devices, and a whole bunch of unique to them expectations about the automotive experience.

I say we run for cover.

But the automakers can't wait to embrace them, no doubt already tired of dealing with cranky baby boomers and their ever-changing lifestyles, as well as the generation after that, those jaded generation-X types.

The Millennial Generation is variously referred to as Generation Y, Generation Next, the Net Generation, or the Echo Boom. Either way, they are the demographic with birth dates between the mid-1970s and the 1990s — the children of the baby boomers.

Other than that baby boom, they are the largest group moving through the North American population. In the U.S, about 11,000 reach driving age every day.

Some automakers are more than ready to fulfill their needs. But before you do that, you have to figure what are their needs are, and how they tick.

One company that did lots of research in this area was Ford, in preparation for the North American launch of Fiesta, which precisely targets Millennials (as well as, ironically, their parents, who are now de-nesting, and ditching big houses and big SUVS for condos and smaller cars).

The North American Fiesta actually debuts today, at the L.A. auto show. Last week some auto scribes, including yours truly, were in Dearborn, Mich., to get a "deep dive" into everything Fiesta. Sheryll Connelly, Ford's global trends and futuring manager, told us what Ford had learned about Millennials. So here are the bullet points (paraphrased)…

- They grew up in the era of urbanization. They are drawn to cities, and enjoy the 24/7 flavour of city life.
- They grew up in the era of miniaturization of products, mostly electronics. Consequently, they understand bigger isn't necessarily better.
- They grew up in the era of sustainability. They view overbuying as irresponsible.
- They don't yet have an auto brand they are loyal to.
- They never expect to be disconnected from their friends and activities, via electronic communication thingies. Being in a car should not disrupt this whatsoever.
- They are used to being chauffeured in their parent's upscale vehicles. They wouldn't know what to do with a window crank. Living rooms have central air and DVD players, and so do SUVs.
- They grew up in a period of heavy consumption and prosperity. They are young, but savvy consumers. They live for finding designer products at discount prices.
- They're not interested in "making do" with cheaper products, like an econobox starter car. They have a sense of entitlement.
- Compared to previous generations, they wait a bit longer before purchasing their first vehicle; because driver education and insurance are more expensive than they used to be, and because parents didn't mind driving them around (some parents say it was the only quality time they got with their ungrateful teenagers). Also, in this digital age, there seems to be less of a need to be physically where their friends are.
- Automakers, and other marketers, need to use non-traditional media to get the word out to these people. Twitter, not television.

"Millennium types like driving and consider it fun, but don't slobber over the automobile as a focal point of their lives."

The final point for today: Millennium types like driving and consider it fun, but don't slobber over the automobile as a focal point of their lives, as did some previous generations.

That's a stake in my heart. But thankfully, I will survive, because I'm not one of those new-age Millennium-generation vampires.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for over 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

Jeep Visentin's 4-wheel love

MyDrive
Heather Buchan
metronews.ca/mydrive

David Visentin is a jeep man. The veteran realtor and host of Love it or List — W Network's popular series in which he and co-host Hilary Farr, an interior designer, compete for a homeowner's decision to keep their house and renovate it, or sell it — doesn't have just one jeep. He has two: A 1977 CJ5 Jeep, which he calls his "fun, summer car," and a 2005 Jeep Liberty, which he uses all winter.

"I do a lot of winter driving, especially because I'm in real estate. And I'm north of the city, so I'm going up and down a lot of hills," he explains. "The Jeep has one of the best four-wheel drive systems there are."

Visentin first got into real estate two decades ago. After finishing school, he got his real estate license in order to work at his dad's thriving company in the town of Rosemont, just north of Toronto while he figured out what he wanted to do with his life. He never got out and says he still loves it.

It seems that when Visentin finds something he loves, he sticks with it. In fact, he's had five different Jeeps over the years. "They look great and they're great in the winter," he explains. His one tip, a lesson he learned the hard way, is to always bring the top with you.

Visentin animatedly recalls a road trip he took with a girlfriend a couple of years ago. "It was a gorgeous weekend and we were driving the CJ to her folks' place in Cobourg, about two-and-a-half hours away," he says. On the drive home, along rolling rural roads, the pair looked up to see the sky quickly turning from blue to black.

"I look in the back and realize I don't have the top," explains Visentin. "All of a sudden, the clouds open up and it's pouring and we're getting soaked. Cars are driving by us and the people are laughing. "I've never forgotten the top since then," says Visentin.

Love it or List it airs on the W Network on Mondays at 9 p.m.

Heather Buchan is a Toronto-based journalist who has worked at Homemakers, Canadian Living, Canadian House & Home and, most recently, Hello! Canada, where she cut her teeth in the world of celebrities.

Realtor and TV host David Visentin can't get enough of Jeeps.

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A Regal beginning
North American production of the all-new 2011 Buick Regal will begin in Oshawa, Ont., in the first quarter of 2011, General Motors has confirmed. The new Regal is a midsize sport sedan based on the Opel Insignia, which was named the 2009 European Car of the Year. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Vibe's got something for everyone

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
for Metro Canada

MODEL: 2003 to 2008 Pontiac Vibe
VEHICLE TYPE: five-door
APPROXIMATE USED PRICE RANGE: $5,000 to $15,500

HISTORY/DESCRIPTION: The Vibe went on sale as a 2003 model and competed with cars like the Subaru Impreza, Dodge Caliber and Mazda3 Sport. It was a success for Pontiac, thanks mainly to generous utility, economical operation and youthful, distinctive styling. Vibe was a five-door liftback, so it's often described by the words "wagon," "hatchback" or even "crossover."

Part of the Vibe's success came from Pontiac's 'something for everyone' approach to models and equipment. Several four-cylinder engines were available with between 126 and 180 horsepower, and Vibe could be had with either a manual or automatic gearbox, too.

As has been Pontiac's way for years, higher-performance models were designated GT. All wheel drive (AWD) was available too — but only with the automatic transmission. Sorry winter driving enthusiasts!

In addition to plenty of model selection, Vibe got folding rear seats, a plasticized cargo area and a full suite of available dealer accessories for customization. Regardless of your lifestyle or sport of choice, the Vibe is probably ready to tackle it.

WHAT OWNERS LIKE: Space, ease of access and driving dynamics were the most well-loved Vibe attributes reported by owners. Flexibility was another major plus, and many also reported low maintenance costs and reasonable fuel costs, too.

WHAT OWNERS HATE: The Vibe owner gripe list is a relatively minor one. Complaints include rear-seat comfort, an awkward rear cargo cover, and quick wear of the factory tires. Finally, though most owners appreciate the low fuel consumption, some do wish for more passing and merging power.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO
The five-door Pontiac Vibe first went on sale in 2003.

Second Gear

COMMON ISSUES: Many Vibe drivers complain of issues related to paint wear and flaking — so be sure to give the car you're considering a thorough exterior inspection. Use any rust, peeling or oxidation to your advantage when trying to hammer out a bottom-line price with the seller.

Though not alarmingly numerous, the main reliability complaint around the first-generation Vibe dealt with transmissions.

Harsh shifting in a used model with an automatic should be questioned and investigated. A known problem may cause debris to clog an internal mechanism within the transmission, resulting in rough gearshifts. This may be especially apparent between first and second gear.

If the model you're considering is an older Vibe with a manual transmission, kill the stereo and climate control fan and listen for any unexpected noises while accelerating. Some owners reported hearing "bearing noise" from the transmission before incurring an expensive bill to repair it.

If a strange noise from the gearbox presents itself and increases as you accelerate, it's best to move to another candidate.

Other owner-reported reliability issues were fairly minor — limited to a cigarette lighter that may pull out from the dashboard, and plastic lug-nut covers that could fall off.

THE VERDICT: If the used Vibe you're considering is well priced and doesn't exhibit any potential transmission issues, you'll likely enjoy its flexibility, uniqueness and energetic styling for years to come.

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Auto123.com picks year's best

Canadian automotive website Auto123.com have announced their annual awards for the best cars of the year. Winners include Mazda3 (Compact Car of the Year) and Ford Taurus (Full Size Car of the Year). Visit auto123. com for a full list of winners. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Night vision at the wheel

Infrared system makes driving safer in dark

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

Of all the senses used when driving, the most important is vision. "I didn't see it" is the most common excuse for collisions, and of course, the problem becomes much worse at night.

Driving Force

While they're not meant to substitute for safe driving practices — it's dangerous to "overdrive your headlights," driving too fast to react to objects as they appear in your lights — night vision systems can help detect dangers such as pedestrians, animals or road signs before they're visible to the driver through the windshield.

Such systems are currently available from a few manufacturers, including Mercedes-Benz, which puts its Night View Assist on its E-Class, S-Class and CL-Class.

"The headlamps transmit two infrared beams, and there is an infrared sensor mounted to the top of the windshield," says David Sherrard, product planner for Mercedes-Benz Canada.

"The camera picks up what the beams are sending back, and based on the distances and the images ahead of you, they're recreated and displayed for you in the instrument cluster."

Night View Assist, available on some Mercedes Benz models, allow drivers to detect people or objects before they're visible to the driver through the windshield.

On average, regular headlights illuminate the road ahead for about 50 metres, while high-beam headlights go about 106 metres. Sherrard says that Night View Assist can "see" ahead about 150 to 200 metres.

Automakers use two types of systems, both with pros and cons: active systems scan with infrared beams, while passive systems use special cameras to measure and display heat, known as thermal imaging. The active system, which Mercedes-Benz uses, has a slightly shorter forward range, but gives a clearer image and works better in warmer weather than passive.

Night View Assist broadcasts in a black-and-white screen in the instrument cluster.

The cluster contains an LCD display which shows an uncannily realistic round speedometer when the system is off, and changes to a speedometer bar below the screen when it's on. Objects that might not immediately show up in the vehicle's headlights are clearly visible on the screen.

"No matter how sophisticated your headlamps, anything that can pick up pedestrians or animals can give you that additional advantage..."
David Sherrard
of Mercedes Benz

"It's supposed to be used the same way as your side or rearview mirrors," Sherrard says. "It's a quick reference, not a substitute for looking out the windscreen.

"Glancing down at it periodically, especially in circumstances where you're not familiar with the road, gives you a momentary check to get better bearings of where you're driving.

"No matter how sophisticated your headlamps, anything that can pick up pedestrians or animals can give you that additional advantage and extra few seconds to react in critical situations."

Location, Location, Location?

Where You Live Can Impact Your Car Insurance Rate

How Much Is Your Postal Code Costing You?

We've all heard that when it comes to real estate, the biggest driver of your success is location. Can the same be said for getting the lowest car insurance rate? The answer is – sort of.

Insurance companies do use a wide variety of risk factors when setting premiums, and where you live is one of them. The question each insurance company tries to answer is "how likely is it a policyholder living in [insert location here] will make a claim and how much will that claim cost to pay out if there is a loss?" If you live in an area that a given insurance company knows to have a high claims rate, all things being equal, you can expect to pay more than someone living in an area with a lower claims rate.

Should I Consider Moving To Get A Better Rate?

Probably not. If you are like most people, picking up and moving to another neighbourhood in hopes of saving money on your car insurance is likely not an option. And the truth is, even if you did move, there's no guarantee you'd get a lower rate, since each insurance company sets its rates independently and can change them up to 4 times per year according to a wide variety of factors of which your location is only one.

What's The REAL Secret To Lowering Your Rate?

The simplest and easiest thing you can do to lower your rate right now is to SHOP AROUND. Why? Because the rates charged by different insurance companies to insure the same driver, with the same car, for the same coverage, can vary by hundreds and even thousands of dollars. Take a look at the table below.

The key is finding the one insurance company that can offer the lowest rate available for your driving profile. InsuranceHotline.com offers an independent, unbiased rate comparison from over 30 top insurance companies to find you the lowest rate for your profile and then connects you with a licensed broker or agent who can provide the policy. It is fast, safe and FREE.

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Rate Comparison

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1 Ticket	$1,018	$2,552	$1,534
1 Accident	$1,849	$3,753	$1,904

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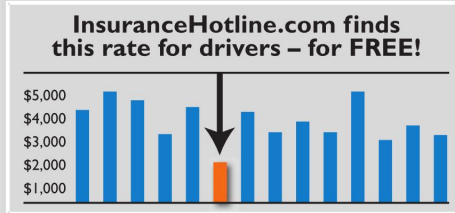

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If you want to be green this holiday, take the bus or train, but if you must fly, stick with economy seating, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. UCS researchers compared trips by car, plane, train and bus to find out which transportation choices generate the fewest emissions. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Travel

A place to put up your paws and relax

Furry travellers now have a place to stretch their legs at Atlanta's airport. A new fenced-in dog park is part of the ground transportation centre on the west end of the passenger terminal at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. The 93-square-metre park, which opened last month, can accommodate two pooches at a time and features flowers, grass, rocks, benches and two original pieces of art. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: BEN.RYCROFT@METRONEWS.CA

Discover Obama's 'lost years'

New York walk tour shows where the U.S. president cut his intellectual teeth

Jeremiah Miller calls the time Barack Obama spent in New York "the lost years," because that period from 1981 to 1985 is not as well-known as his roots in Hawaii or his recent years in Chicago. To fill in the gap, Miller offers a tour of Upper Manhattan called "Obama's New York."

The two-hour $25 walking tour includes stops at Columbia University, a Harlem subway station, and the street where the man who now sleeps in the White House once slept in an alley.

"I became intrigued by the fact that not much is known about his life during this period, but this was a pivotal time for him," said Miller.

"He was searching for himself. He felt he didn't fit in. That's why he came to New York — to find community."

Obama completed his college degree at Columbia University in 1983, having transferred there as a junior from Occidental College in Los Angeles. After college, he worked in Harlem for the New York Public Interest Research Group, a job that led to community organizing in Chicago.

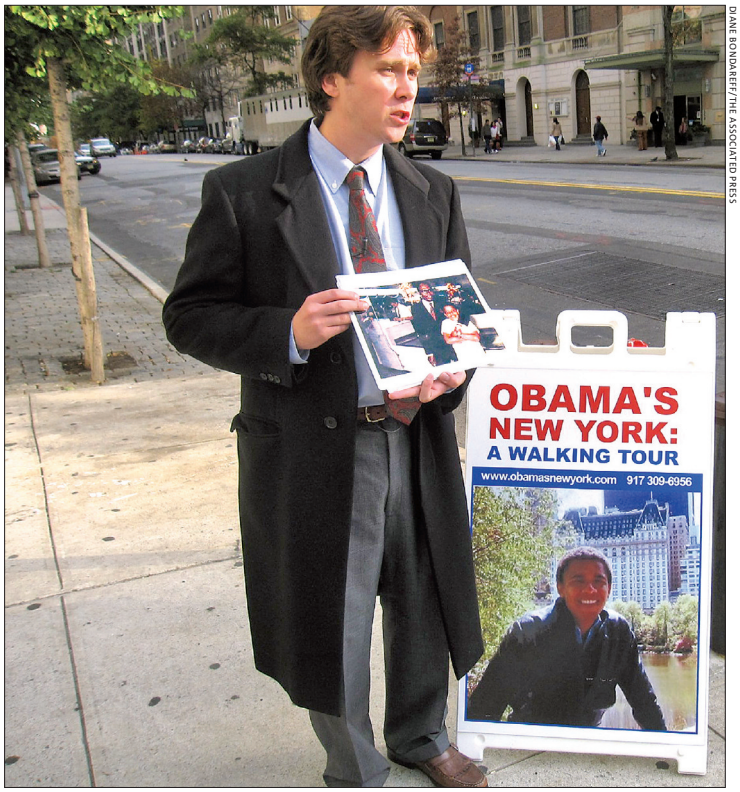
Obama even opens his memoir, Dreams from My Father, with a scene in New York.

It was the day he got the news that his Kenyan father was dead. Miller pauses on a sidewalk while leading the tour to narrate that dramatic opening passage from the book, as he reads aloud Obama's recollection of the phone call from a relative in Kenya:

"'Can you hear me? I say, your father is dead.' ... That was all, the line cut off, and I sat down on the couch, smelling eggs burn in the kitchen, staring at cracks in the plaster, trying to measure my loss."

Miller reads another passage from the memoir while standing on 109th Street near Amsterdam Avenue, where, Obama wrote, "I spent my first night in Manhattan curled up in an alleyway."

He was supposed to stay in an apartment at 142 W. 109th St., and eventually he did move in, but nobody was home when he arrived.



DIANE BONDAREFF/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Above: The Obama walking tour takes tourists through the places that shaped the U.S. President's intellectual roots. Upper right: Obama spent his first night in New York sleeping on the streets after no one was home at that apartment he was to be staying at.

DIANE BONDAREFF/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama completed his college degree at Columbia University.

"It was where Barry the boy became Barack the man...He may not have found his community, but he did find himself."
Jeremiah Miller

After several other stops, the tour ends by hopping on the No. 1 train and heading uptown to City College in Harlem.

Here Obama worked for NYPIRG, organizing students on issues like recycling.

He also lobbied to have the 137th Street subway station cleaned up.

Miller contends that the time Obama spent in New York put the future president on a path of activism and community service that eventually led to the White House.

"It was where Barry the boy became Barack the man," Miller said.

"He may not have found his community, but he did find himself."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Museum not a black or white issue

RACISM Every day before heading to Little Rock Central High School in the fall of 1957, nine black students gathered at Daisy and L.C. Bates's home to prepare for the angry mob they faced as they integrated the all-white school.

"It was kind of like a war room in a sense," said Carlotta Walls LaNier, one of the black students commonly known as the Little Rock Nine. "It was a place that we gathered and got ready to go to school."

The small tan brick home in south Little Rock is easy to miss, with a plaque in the front yard marking it as a national historic site. But a nonprofit is changing that by opening the house, during Black History Month, as a museum. The L.C. and Daisy Bates Museum Foundation Inc. and the Christian Ministerial Alliance, which owns the house, has made $75,000 in repairs and is promoting the site as a complement to a museum about the desegregation crisis located near Central High School.

The Bates civil rights efforts began years before they opened their home to the students. They founded the Arkansas State Press in 1941, and turned the newspaper into a leading voice of the civil rights movement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bates

- Daisy Bates, who died in 1999, served as a mentor to the black students who integrated the school. In 2001, then-Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee signed legislation making the third Monday in February a holiday to honour Bates.

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Six Flags buys Kiddieland rollercoaster

Weeks after Kiddieland Amusement Park closed in suburban Chicago, Six Flags Great America has bought its famed wooden roller coaster — The Little Dipper. Six Flags paid $33,000 for the roller coaster that had been at Kiddieland since 1950. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thailand the best place to find love: Study

If you're looking for love while working abroad, consider a move to Thailand.

And pray head office doesn't send you to Qatar.

A survey of over 3,100 expatriates around the world by HSBC Bank International compared their experiences while living and working abroad.

Almost half of expats surveyed in Thailand said they found love in the country, compared with just four per cent who had the same good luck in India or Qatar.

PHOTOS.COM

Thailand is considered the best place find love, according to a study by HSBC bank.

Canada was judged the best place in the world overall to live by other expatriates. Australia was in second place and Thailand in third.

The survey indicated that expats coming to Canada have the best quality of life and find it relatively easy to integrate with the local population.

Considered to be the worst for expatriates in a list of 26 countries were China, Britain, Russia, India and, in last place, Qatar.

The report covered such things as accommodation, food, entertainment, health care, working hours and commuting to work.

Over half of the expats questioned had lived abroad for more than five years.

In Thailand, 60 per cent of expats said they had household staff. In Vietnam, more than 90 per cent did.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Travel deficit balloons to $3.3B

MONEY Canada's international travel deficit widened to a record high $3.3 billion in the third quarter from $3.2 billion in the second.

Statistics Canada reports the main contributor was a 0.8 per cent decline in spending by foreign travellers in Canada between the second and third quarters to $3.7 billion, its lowest level in six years.

At the same time, Canadians spent just over $7 billion travelling outside the country, a 0.1 per cent increase.

Travel spending by foreigners in Canada has fallen by 15.1 per cent since it peaked at $4.4 billion in the fourth quarter of 2004 — the result of a drop in spending by American travellers in Canada.

The travel deficit with the United States declined by $111 million between the second and third quarters to $2.2 billion.

This was the result of a 2.9 per cent decline in travel spending by Canadians in the United States to $3.9 billion.

RENE JOHNSON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canadians are spending more tourism dollars abroad while travellers here are tightening up their purse strings.

Spending by American travellers in Canada decreased 0.4 per cent to $1.8 billion, the lowest quarterly level in over 12 years.

Canada's travel deficit with overseas countries increased by $152 million to a record high of $1.1 billion in the third quarter.

An increase in travel spending overseas and a decrease in spending by travellers from overseas countries in Canada were responsible for the higher deficit.

Canadian travellers spent $3.1 billion in overseas countries, up 4.3 per cent from the previous quarter.

Spending by travellers from overseas countries fell 1.2 per cent to $2 billion.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Roosevelt Hotel brings its Christmas display back
The historic Roosevelt Hotel is bringing back its famous Christmas lobby display, but with a new look. The Christmas display, which runs through Jan. 4, includes 20 birch trees, a canopy of white birch branches decorated with thousands of lights, along with 26 Douglas fir Christmas trees. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One glass at a time in Ireland

Guinness may be what it's known for, but the island offers plenty more to explore for travellers

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
Metro World News

Sandwiched between the Atlantic Ocean to the West, and the United Kingdom to the East, Ireland is a very special place to take a holiday.

The spectacular landscape, which ranges from the jagged mountains and sandy pearl beaches of the coast to the emerald inland vegetation and its fantastically friendly people, are part of what make Ireland one of Europe's most beautiful islands. Here's the top five must see and do's.

Oysters in Galway

Situated on the west coast Ireland, Galway is home to the world's tastiest aphrodisiac — the oyster. The Irish equivalent to sushi and champagne, little beats a night of cracking open fresh oysters followed by a pint of creamy Guinness. The best place in the area is Kelly Galway's oysters in Kilcolgan (kelly-oysters.com)

METRO WORLD NEWS

Ireland offers many locations that are perfect for day-trip adventures.

Horseriding in Connemara

Connemara's striking landscape of rugged mountains, cobalt blue sea and jade green esplanades is best admired on horseback. Trot or gallop your way along the Connemara Trail (connemaratrail.com), which follows the ebb and flow of the Atlantic Ocean.

Guinness in Dublin

The main factory of Ireland's pride and joy — the Guinness Storehouse (guinness-storehouse.com) in Dublin provides a good starting point to a cheerful holiday. A visit covers the basics of stout beer making followed by the serious task of tasting. Dublin alone is worth putting your pint down for.

METRO WORLD NEWS

You can visit the main Guinness factory in Dublin for a tasting.

Gaelic paradise in Donegal

Thanks to the feisty waves coming in from the Atlantic Ocean and beautiful stretches of beach, the areas around Donegal are ideal for water sports. Bundoran is a gem for those seeking great surfing. Whilst not exactly your typical 'surfer's paradise', the mystical atmosphere, amazing wave and swell quality and reefs all add up to create the perfect surf stop.

Gaelic culture in the Aran Islands

The Aran Islands, clustered at the mouth of Galway Bay are an ideal day trip there is a frequent — and pleasant- shuttle service by ferry departing from Rossaveal Harbour. The three islands — Inish Mor, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr are "Gaeltachts" (Irish-speaking) and strongly instilled with Irish culture. The largest, Inish Mor, is peppered with historical monuments dating back to the Bronze Age and Inis Meáin is where the famous wooly Aran Jumpers are produced.

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Take a Christmas tour in Newport

The historic mansions of Newport, Rhode Island are hosting tours to show off Christmas trees, wreaths, floral decorations, period-style ornaments and windows illuminated with white candles. Holiday tours will be held daily through Jan. 3. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Snowboarders and skiers are celebrating as Utah has begun to relax its state laws on liquor restrictions.

Olympic buzz still lifting Utah

State lawmakers finally starting to relax their strict liquor laws

In addition to great powder snow and a long winter, Utah's ski industry is blessed by the lingering buzz of the 2002 Winter Olympics, plus a major nearby airport that makes getting to Salt Lake City easy from other parts of the country.

The Olympics brought international acclaim, dozens of new and faster lifts and thousands of more hectares of skiable terrain. Traffic on the slopes was up by 37 per cent in the six years after the Olympics, before the economy soured, making Utah skiing a $1 billion industry.

"That was our coming-out party," said Nathan Rafferty, president of the trade group Ski Utah. "We were always in the shadows of other resorts, like Colorado's. But hosting the Olympics put us on the map."

The most noticeable Olympic legacy has been nonstop development, most recently at Solitude Mountain Resort, which just added its fourth new chair lift since the 2002 Games.

Off the slopes, this season's biggest improvement is a new set of state liquor laws. The reforms broke up a private club system that made getting inside a bar without a membership a hassle. Utah still strictly regulates drinking venues, a quota system limits their numbers, and regular strength draft beer is banned, thanks to the influence of the teetotalling Mormon church.

But lawmakers are starting to ease up, in part to make the state a more attractive destination to younger snowboarders and skiers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ELISE AMENDOLA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It has been eight years since the Olympics left Salt Lake City, but the region continues to still experience phenomenal growth to its ski industry.

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Kentucky Derby festival to rock
Churchill Downs, the home of the Kentucky Derby, will become a stomping ground for some of the country's best known musicians next summer. The three-day music festival will feature more than 65 band, including Bon Jovi, Kenny Chesney, and the Dave Matthews Band. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Snowbirds can still get that Christmas feel

If you're one of those snowbirds who heads to Florida this time of year, you'll find lots of holiday displays — even without the cold weather.

St. Augustine celebrates Nights of Lights through Jan. 31 with light displays, a Winter Wonderland area with ice skating, a refrigerated ice slide, and sleigh rides.

St. Augustine Historic Inns is sponsoring a Bed and Breakfast Holiday Tour Dec. 12-13, with a dozen inns showing off their holiday decorations each day. Each inn partners with a local culinary establishment to provide a signature treat for participants, and most will offer opportunities to meet local artists. Old Town Trolley provides free transportation for tour participants who prefer to ride instead of walking to each inn on the tour.

In Delray Beach, a 30-metre-tall artificial tree, lit Dec. 3 with 15,000 lights, is a holiday centrepiece at Old School Square. A holiday parade follows on Dec. 12 with 70 floats.

At Epcot, you can learn about international traditions at Holidays Around the World, and hear the Christmas story told by celebrity narrators like Whoopi Goldberg.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Walt Disney does Christmas

- In Orlando, guests at Walt Disney World can attend Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party.

Travel in brief

CALIFORNIA The Republic Cafe in Salinas, Calif., served as a gathering place for the local Asian-American community for decades. Now federal funds are helping transform it into a museum and cultural centre. The renovation got a boost in November from a three-year, $600,000 Department of Housing and Urban Development grant to California State University, Monterey Bay. The planned Asian Cultural Center and Museum is the centrepiece of the Chinatown Renewal Project, led by the city and university. Wally Ahtye, whose family owned the cafe, says the city's Chinese, Japanese and Filipino communities came together there, holding celebrations, weddings and Chinese New Year parties.

INDIANA If you're a fan of the classic Christmas movie It's a Wonderful Life, consider a visit to the hometown of Jimmy Stewart, who starred in the film as George Bailey. Indiana, Pa., 88 kms east of Pittsburgh, has a Jimmy Stewart Boulevard, a Jimmy Stewart Museum, a Jimmy Stewart statue outside the courthouse and even a local airport named for him. The museum is hosting matinees of It's a Wonderful Life every Saturday and Sunday through Jan. 3 at 2 p.m.

HANUKKAH Menorahs made from ice, Legos and chocolate will be part of some of the Hanukkah celebrations sponsored by the Chabad-Lubavitch Jewish outreach organization in 650 cities around the world. The eight-day holiday begins at sundown on Dec. 11. habad events will range from a Dec. 13 parade with over 100 cars decorated with Hanukkah flags heading to the Jacksonville Landing in Jacksonville, Fla., to a Hanukkah comedy night in Oxnard, Calif., on Dec. 15. Other unusual Hanukkah celebrations will include a Dec. 16 event featuring a menorah made from chocolate, candy and doughnuts in Houston, and a Dec. 14 Hanukkah party at Binghamton University in upstate New York with a menorah made from thousands of pieces of Lego. After it's lit, the Lego menorah will be disassembled and donated, along with hundreds of other toys collected in a toy drive, to an organization for children with cancer.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Suri likes high heels

Katie Holmes doesn't think there's anything wrong with dressing her three-year-old daughter Suri in high heels. "Like every little girl, she loves my high heels," she tells Access Hollywood. USMAGAZINE.COM

Entertainment

New comedy

Nicole Richie is to become a comedy star. The socialite has teamed up with US TV network ABC to create a new comedy show, in which she will also star. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Keys launches contest to take fans on trip to Africa

Alicia Keys says her first visit to Africa was so emotional and inspiring that she is ready to take others there to experience something similar.

The Grammy-winning singer is launching a contest through her charity, Keep a Child Alive, that will give five people an opportunity to visit the continent with her. She says her initial trip to Africa "totally changed my life."

"Going to Africa was unbelievable for me," the 28-year-old said.

"I was probably like 19 or something. I was asked to come to Africa to perform, and so you think, 'I'm just the girl from Harlem, I wrote a couple of songs on 137th Street, and then suddenly you want me to come to Africa? And people will know me? And people will know the songs?' It was a mind-blowing experience for me."

"I was able to see the great separation between have and have not," Keys said. "I was able to see the incredible spirit of people. I was able to learn firsthand about the AIDS pandemic of Africa."

Fans will be able to enter the contest online at the foundation's website, or by sending a text. The fee for the text is $5, but it will be donated to Keep a Child Alive.

Keys said the winners, who will travel throughout Africa for five days sometime next year, will visit the people and places that were most influential to her.

"I find that the more that I'm able to connect with people's life experiences, the more I'm able to make better music," Keys said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Armed to the teeth

Swollen Members help bandmate overcome addiction

KAREN BLISS
for Metro Canada

There was a time Vancouver's Swollen Members was ubiquitous, touring non-stop behind a prolific output of material, and taking home three consecutive Juno Awards for best rap recording from 2001 to 2003. The group's fourth win would come in 2007 for their album, Black Magic, but behind the scenes things were grim.

Like an episode of A&E's addiction reality show Intervention, rapper Prevail and DJ/producer Rob The Viking worried and took steps to help their bandmate, rapper Mad Child, who escalated from a Percocet addiction to Oxycontin, as many as 20 80-mg a day — the equivalent of 320 Percocet, Mad Child puts in perspective.

It is nothing short of a miracle that Swollen Members have returned intact — with a fourth member no less, singer/rapper Tre Nyce — and with an impressive new album, Armed To The Teeth. The group is currently on a cross-Canada tour that brings them to Toronto's Lee's Palace tonight.

Swollen Members play Lee's Palace in Toronto tonight in support of latest album Armed To The Teeth.

When Prevail finally clued into what his longtime friend and musical partner had got himself into the past two years, he says, "I was talking to (real name) Shane's parents quite frequently, letting them know what was going on ... We wanted to keep each other informed.

"I think we all needed a support network, just in case," says Prevail.

Mad Child, whose struggle can be heard throughout Armed To The Teeth, particularly on the detailed track My Life, after several tries at rehab got clean at his parents' home six months ago with the help of a drug prescribed by his family doctor called Suboxone, an opioid medication to treat people addicted to illicit opiates.

"That's an important thing that I want to let people know about, that you can go on Suboxone and get off this s—. It is a miracle drug," says Mad Child. "It doesn't get you high. It just makes it so that you can live your life again and it blocks you from thinking about doing that drug anymore."

Mad Child has no second thoughts about being so public about his addiction.

"I definitely want to be able to talk to kids," he says. "The reason I'm so open about it is I put a couple of songs out on MySpace on my own little page before the album dropped and I got an overwhelming response from kids or young adults that were like 'Yo, I'm going through the same s— and this really helps me.'"

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Hamilton quits series

Hollywood star George Hamilton has quit I'm A Celebrity after more than two weeks in the jungle, British TV channel ITV has confirmed. Hamilton, 70, is the third contestant to quit this series, following Camilla Dallerup and Katie Price. ANANOVA.COMS

Conflict's intimate side

Portman studied her real-life counterpart for military wife role in Brothers

AARTI VIRANI
Metro World News

Natalie Portman plays a mother role for the first time in her portrayal of military wife Grace Cahill in the drama Brothers. Also starring in the movie are Tobey Maguire (pictured) and Jake Gyllenhall.

It's an overcast Saturday afternoon, and inside a swanky, Manhattan hotel room, Natalie Portman delicately sips on a cup of tea.

"I've been doing interviews since I was 12," muses the 28-year old, almost incredulously. For her latest film, Brothers, in theatres Friday, she plays a mother — and a heartbreakingly courageous one, too — for the very first time.

It's tempting to assume the sole purpose of director Jim Sheridan's film, the tale of Sam Cahill, (Tobey Maguire) a Marine gone missing in Afghanistan, is to exhibit America's never-ending war. On the contrary, Brothers, which also features Jake Gyllenhaal as Cahill's wayward and fresh-out-of-jail brother, is an unflinching look at conflict's more intimate face — namely, the families it ravages and ruptures along the way.

Brothers opens in theatres on Friday

"I don't think this is a very political movie," claims Portman. A welcome respite from the self-proclaimed "cute girl parts" that are often thrust her way, she plays military wife Grace Cahill with a tenaciousness that she attributes to her extensive research: She spent time with her real-life counterparts prior to shooting.

"I was surprised at how calm and strong these women were," Portman says. "I guess it's a historical feminine trait … to be able to rise to the occasion."

Portman is certainly on the rise, though she's getting tired of the constant shuttling that life as an A-list actress requires. "I'm a total gypsy," she confesses, "but at a certain point, you can't really have a life." She has just wrapped shooting in North Ireland for Your Highness, where she'll star as a committed princess defending her kingdom alongside James Franco and Zooey Deschanel.

"I kick some serious ass in that movie," she says, grinning impishly.

Character building

• Portman's not the only one who did her homework for her role in Brothers. While Tobey Maguire engaged in rigorous training exercises with the Army National Guard (and dropped a staggering 20 pounds to effectively portray an emaciated prisoner of war), Jake Gyllenhaal visited juvenile halls, becoming acquainted with an inspiring young man who eventually scored a spot in the film. "I brought him to Jim (Sheridan) who said, 'This boy's an actor,'" Gyllenhaal recalls. "He's in a helicopter scene with Tobey." AARTI VIRANI/ METRO WORLD NEWS

Jake Gyllenhall

Mix of Six

SEASONAL
When: 8 p.m.
Where: 1 Theatre Ln.
John McDermott performs a seasonal concert at the Rose Theatre.

MUSIC
When: 8:30 p.m.
Where: 1296 Queen St. W.,
The Neil Young'uns play the Cadillac Lounge tonight.

THEATRE
When: Tonight
Where: 736 Bathurst St.
The Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts present Nunsense II: The Second Coming... at the Bathurst Street Theatre.

TALK
When: 7 p.m.
Where: 100 Queen's Pk.
CBC's Anna Maria Tremonti hosts a talk with members of the Iraqi Nonviolence Network at the ROM.

PERFORMANCE
When: 8 P.M.
Where: 178 Victoria St.
The Yamato Drummers of Japan play Massey Hall. masseyhall.com

COMEDY
When: Tonight
Where: 642 Church St.
Spirits Open Mic presents Maritime Merry at Spirits Bar & Grill.

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Mellencamp's son starts anti-smoking page for dad

John Mellencamp's 14-year-old son has started a campaign on Facebook that he hopes will get his rocker dad to quit smoking. The 58-year-old Mellencamp has said many times since his 1994 heart attack that he's failed in trying to kick his decades-old habit. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cadence is Coupland's weapon

GETTY IMAGES FILE PHOTO

Douglas Coupland's novel, Generation X, is taking part in CBC's Canada Reads contest.

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

A Nova Scotia family, guilt-ridden middle-aged woman, three Chinese Canadian siblings coming of age, a trio of wanderers in Montréal and an entire generation are set to face off in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's ninth annual Canada Reads competition.

The war of words unfolds between March 8 and 12, 2010 on CBC Radio One and digital television channel Bold. It pits five Canadians against one another to defend a book of their choice as, one-by-one, defenders and their books are ousted by fellow panelists until just one remains.

Winning can trigger the "Canada Reads effect", a pass to the top of best-selling book lists and other opportunities, explained competition host Jian Ghomeshi. Moderating the debate for his third consecutive year, the host of CBC Radio arts and culture magazine Q revealed the defenders and authors during a press conference yesterday at CBC's Toronto headquarters.

Although they'd never met before yesterday, Edmonton poet laureate Rollie Pemberton (a.k.a. rapper Cadence Weapon) and Vancouver author Douglas Coupland developed instant rapport, often turning questions asked by media into one-on-one conversations.

Pemberton is defending Coupland's debut novel Generation X, a framed narrative that relates stories of three traveling post-baby boomers to modern culture.

"It's the one I instantly thought of if I could represent a book, and a book I felt was thematically similar to things I've written and believe," said Pemberton.

To Coupland, his nomination by Pemberton's gesture just 24, is an indication Generation X itself speaks across generations. "It's not a snapshot or even time capsule of 1989/1990," he said, "It's something eternal that's going on inside the book."

Although he considers "deeply satisfying", Coupland said he won't listen to the program, deeming it too psychologically distancing. "For me, one of the creepiest things on earth would be having a tape recorder at a dinner party and listening to people's conversations as they leave: 'Ugh, what's with his hair… the way he talks… the way he chews his canapé'," he said.

Pemberton said he understands Coupland's hesitation, but won't tear apart competing books in order to win. "I will talk about why I like my book, but I'm not going to do it in the context of, 'My book is better than yours because this'," he said.

Hurt Locker wins best feature

GOTHAM AWARDS The Hurt Locker has won for best feature at the 19th annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.

The award for Kathryn Bigelow's film about a bomb squad in Iraq was presented Monday evening at a ceremony in New York. The film also won for best ensemble performance.

The Gotham awards also named the movie Food, Inc. as the best documentary. Robert Siegel, the writer-director of Big Fan, won for breakthrough director.

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Jay-Z, The Storkes, Pink join Isle of Wight fest

Organizers of the Isle of Wight festival have bagged an impressive line-up for next year's festival. Rapper Jay-Z, The Strokes and Pink have been confirmed for the three-day event. ANANOVA.COM

The xx generation

British buzz band gives R&B futuristic spin

CAM LINDSAY
for Metro Canada

The xx could be a true enigma. The mysterious name, the symbolic use of the letter x, a colour palette restricted to only black and white, and that sound — a futuristic spin on R&B full of affecting voices, snapping rhythms, deep bass grooves, reverberating guitar twists and pale keyboard flecks, all broadcasting like a midnight radio transmission.

But singer-guitarist Romy Madley Croft isn't trying to manufacture such an image. The way she discusses her London-based band with singer/bassist Oliver Sim and producer Jamie Smith (former guitarist Baria Qureshi recently left the band during their current tour because of exhaustion) shows there's nothing to hide with The xx.

According to Croft, their debut album, xx, is so relaxed and cool simply because it reflects the type of people they are. "We're all pretty chilled out people, I think were all similar in that way," she admits. "None of us are loud or in your face, so it wouldn't be very useful for the music to be so."

The music may not be loud, but it is definitely innovative, uplifting and seductive. Croft says their inspiration came from all sorts of avenues.

"I love all kinds of music, we're not really into sticking to genres," she says. "Personally, I find the vocal melodies of R&B and pop exciting. And we're all fans of bass, which R&B and hip hop generally have a lot of."

Croft credits Smith, a fledgling music producer, as a big part of shaping The xx's unique sound. "Jamie knows how we should sound. We have a very honest relationship with him," she explains. "We're just lucky that Jamie has the knowledge to enable us to be self-contained in recording and producing."

Smith helped establish their sound through the use of an MPC, a Japanese-made sampler and MIDI sequencer that ended up reinventing their performances by replacing the backing CDs the band had been using for gigs.

"If you go out of time with a CD, its hell," Croft admits. "Having Jamie on MPC means we can feel like a live band. If we go out of time, at least we can go out of time together."

With just three members remaining, their meticulous sound could be a challenge to reproduce live, but Croft downplays this. "There are a lot of subtleties that we need to get right, but it doesn't feel too difficult this way. We just need some quiet time before the gig."

In Concert

- Catch The xx tonight at the Phoenix Concert Theatre.

The music may not be loud, but The xx's debut album is innovative, uplifting and seductive.

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TO	Vu	SD	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/2/09	265	353	2	TVO	The Secret Life of Primates		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Whitechapel (N)		Empire of the Word (N)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Bones (HDTV) (N)		Glee "Mattress" (N)		Melrose Place "June"		News Final
	215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6	CBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dragons' Den (HDTV) (N)		Stars on Ice: On the Edge (N)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Ted Rogers		Mercy (HDTV)		Modern Family	Cougar Town	The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Access H.	So You Think You Can Dance		Law & Order: SVU		(10:02) Criminal Minds		News
	218	345	11	CHCH	*Four Rooms* ★ (1995, Drama) Tim Roth, Valeria Golino.				*Johnny Mnemonic* ★ (1995, Science Fiction) Keanu Reeves.				News at 11 (N)
	-	-	14	-	Family Guy	The Office	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Away From
	213	326	15	SUN	The Insider (N)	George Lopez	*Christmas Comes to Willow Creek* ★★ (1987, Drama)				The Insider	Hitchcock Pres	Becker
	-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Access H.	Rudolph, Red-Nosed Reindeer		Grammy Nominations Concert		(10:02) Criminal Minds		News 4 at 11
	-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Christmas-Rockefeller		Law & Order: SVU		The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Modern Family	The Middle (N)	Modern Family	Cougar Town	(10:01) Eastwick (N)		News
	219	346	20	ACH-B	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	Old Christine	The Middle (N)	The Vampire Diaries		(10:01) Eastwick (N)		A News
	-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	So You Think You Can Dance		Glee "Mattress" (N)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61	PBS	News-Lehrer	Wait for God	Ed Sullivan's Rock and Roll Classics: The 60s				Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Live		
	297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Gossip Girl (HDTV)		The Vampire Diaries		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331	SBK	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Law & Order: SVU		WBZ News (N)	What's-Store	The Office	Name Is Earl	Frasier
	298	653	332	TLA	The Tyra Show		According-Jim	Family Guy	KTLA News	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Gossip Girl
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		Planet Earth		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report		Rebuilding America		American Greed		American Greed		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22	net	Hooters Pageant 2009		Best Damn Top 50 Special		Sid vs. Alexander		Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30	TSN	NHL Hockey Vancouver Canucks at New Jersey Devils. (HDTV) (Live)					SportsCentre		That's Hockey!	SportsCentre
	411	457	58	OLN	Ghost Hunters International		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Survivorman		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	81	SC	Pass Time	NASCAR Hub	Dangerous Drives (HDTV)		Pinks Outtakes	Pass Time	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pass Time
family	551	542	25	YTV	Drake & Josh	That's-Weird	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline Proj
	554	544	45	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	556	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	The Suite Life	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
cable variety	602	567	27	W	Friends	Friends	*Holiday Wishes* (2006, Drama) Amber Benson.				*Home by Christmas* (2006, Drama)		
	570	580	29	MM	Secret Life of American Teen		Secret Life of American Teen		Secret Life of American Teen		To Be Announced		disBAND
	615	520	31	A&E	Dog the Bounty Hunter		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Steven Seagal	Steven Seagal	Bounty Hunter
	700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Caterina e le Sue Figlie				George Lopez	George Lopez	Lopez Tonight
	571	581	36	MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	575	583	38	CMT	Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Due South
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		The Guard		Cra$h & Burn "Freedom"		Bones		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	The Achievers	Bravo!Videos	Arts & Minds	O'Reagan File	Wingfield	Star Portraits	White Collar		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	Newlywed	Newlywed	In Laws	In Laws	ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	Ice Pilots NWT (N)		Life After People		Ice Road Truckers		Ice Pilots NWT (HDTV)		Outlaw Bikers
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Michael	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Intervention	Property Virgin	Unsellables UK	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	Law & Order: SVU		The Office	The Office	*Sahara* ★★ (2005, Adventure)		
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Deep Blue Sea* ★★ (1999, Science Fiction) Thomas Jane.					The Game	Mo'Nique
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Torchwood "Fragments"		Supernatural (HDTV)		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	52	MTV	The Hills	The City	Hills-City	16 and Pregnant	"Life After Labor"		Teen Mom Launch Special		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	King	King	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	What Happen?	Family Guy	King	King
	603	561	56	FOOD	Ricardo	Fresh-Anna	Challenge		Iron Chef America		Chopped		Wed Cake
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Keeping Up	Open All Hours	Jeeves and Wooster		Unscripted (N)	Driven-Vision	Poltergeist
	621	527	63	STR	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Dora-Explorer	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Bucket-Dinos	Babar	Big & Small	Max & Ruby
	526	507	249	VIVA	Cold Case		Missing "Phoenix Rising"		The Closer		Cold Case		Mediums
	300	601	301	M1	*The Duchess*	*Out of Control* (2009, Suspense)			*The International* ★★ (2009, Suspense) Clive Owen.				Lock 'n Load
	305	612	306	PIX	*19 Months*	*Black Pearls* ★ (1990, Drama)			*End of Days* ★ (1999, Horror) Arnold Schwarzenegger.				*Double Cross*
	520	-	-	DISC	Daily Planet (N)		Mighty Ships "Maersk"		Mega Builders		Mayday "Crash Course"		Daily Planet
	637	-	-	TVLND	Red Green	Red Green	Fantasy Island		Hart to Hart		Andy Griffith	Phil Silvers	Bizarre
	605	-	-	FASH	Fashion on Ice 2007		Fashion Tele.	RAW	Canada's Next Top Model		Fashion Television-Toronto Fashion Week		

critics'corner

End of Days

The title of this grim 1999 melodrama proved sadly prophetic for the great Rod Steiger, as his role here was one of his least. For star Arnold Schwarzenegger, it was one of his least. Ah-nuld plays Cane, an ex-cop fighting the devil (Gabriel Byrne) to save the woman (Robin Tunney) chosen to bear the Antichrist. Kevin Pollak adds some touches of levity as Cane's partner, but it's not enough to save the flick from damnation to the "don't bother" bin. 9 PM on PIX

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

"I'm cuuute! She said I'm cuuute!" "Bumbles bounce!" "I wanna be a dentist." And of course, "Rudolph with your nose so bright, won't you guide my sleigh tonight?" Ol' Rudy is 45 this year and as cute as ever, ready to delight the children and grandbabies of the viewers who met him back in '64. If you haven't seen this Christmas chestnut in a few years, it's always worth another look. 8 PM on CBS

Last Station, Precious top Spirit noms

MOVIES The urban drama Precious and the Leo Tolstoy period piece The Last Station each have earned a leading five nominations for the Spirit Awards that honour independent film.

The two acclaimed movies will compete for best feature film with the romance 500 Days of Summer and the immigrant dramas Amreeka and Sin Nombre.

The war-on-terror drama The Messenger ran second with four nominations, including best feature from a first-time director.

Also nominated for best first feature is the horror sensation Paranormal Activity, which was shot for just $15,000 and has taken in more than $100 million US at the box office.

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So if we take long walks, we'll look like Heidi?
Heidi Klum lost her pregnancy weight thanks to her baby, femalefirst.co.uk reports. She modelled for Victoria's Secret six weeks after giving birth to her fourth child, and credits taking long walks with the infant for helping her shed the excess pounds. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Russ meets Katy's preacher parents

BUT SERIOUSLY, WHAT GUY WOULD THEY APPROVE OF? Katy Perry has reportedly introduced bad-boy boyfriend Russell Brand to her parents — who just happen to be pastors. "Russell must go towards the light and not toward the darkness," Perry's mother, Mary Hudson, says, according to Hollyscoop. "Only God can take the very worst person and turn them around for good." Brand and Perry's father also exchanged copies of their respective books, even though Brand's book is about his previous experiences as a drug addict. METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

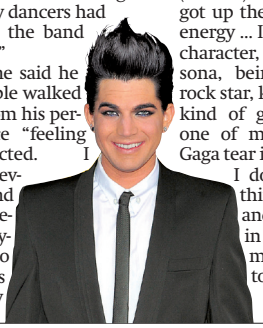
David Spade doesn't get movies like other people do,
Demi Moore is staying in tonight,
Rob Thomas has really interesting errands to run, and Ice-T is dealing with some anger issues.

@davidspade
just saw 'The road' . hilarious. wall to wall laughs. they will def make this into a sitcom
@mrskutcher
Oh my a new season of Hoarders is on tonight!!!
@ThisIsRobThomas
going into the city today for new tattoos!
@FINALLEVEL
MAN I miss being able to punch suckas in the grill without gettin sued!! METRO WORLD NEWS

Adam's dad thinks he should say sorry

TRANSLATION: THERE'S STILL TIME FOR YOU TO GET A LAW DEGREE, SON Among the people who weren't thrilled with Adam's Lambert's controversial American Music Awards performance: His dad, usmagazine.com reports. "My dad was like, 'Maybe you should apologize, Adam,'" he said on The Ellen DeGeneres Show yesterday. "I was like, 'You know, dad, I don't feel like I did anything wrong. It just wasn't maybe the right judgment call. It's a taste thing more than an obscenity thing. I think it's just a taste level.'"

During his performance, he smooched another guy, simulated oral sex and flipped off the audience. Looking back, "maybe that wasn't the best first impression to make again," Lambert, 27, says. "I mean, I had fun up there, I had a good time, my dancers had fun and the band had fun."



Still, he said he felt people walked away from his performance "feeling disrespected. I would never intend to disrespect anybody. So that was not my intention."

He said that "people aren't used to seeing gay men portrayed that way on TV. The gay male image in the media tends to be very (clichéd) and safe ... I think I got up there and put more energy ... I was putting on a character, putting on a persona, being this kind of rock star, kind of dangerous kind of guy. After seeing one of my favorites Lady Gaga tear it apart on stage ... I don't know something came over me, and I got caught up in the moment and maybe went a little too far." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Taylor's jealous of Leighton

PLEASE LET THIS COME TO BLOWS A rivalry is reportedly brewing on the set of Gossip Girl over two of the show's stars' musical ambitions. Taylor Momsen is said to be upset that the show has thrown its support behind co-star Leighton Meester's singing career instead of hers. "Taylor is not happy that Gossip Girl has been playing Leighton's music on the show, and they have never asked to play any of her songs," a source tells HollywoodLife.com. "It's creating a lot of tension on set." When pressed for comment, a rep for the show's network, the CW, doesn't mince words: "The show will support Taylor and her music when the time is right, but her music is not ready yet." METRO WORLD NEWS

Nick will tour without brothers

HE'LL BE EASIER PREY FOR THE COUGARS Nick Jonas is going on tour without his brothers, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The 17-year-old Jonas Brothers singer will play concerts across the U.S. next month with his side project The Administration after their debut at the Grammy nominations concert tonight. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Lady Gaga learns to embrace her 'darkness'

MAYBE HER MUSIC WILL IMPROVE Lady Gaga struggles to cope with feeling low while out on the road but has now learned to accept her "darkness."

"The lowest point is loneliness, being on the road. I have a chronic sadness that recurs," she said. "The lowest point was in Australia in May. I was overwhelmingly sad, and I didn't know why because I had all these things to be happy about." Despite her black moods, the singer says her emotional state inspired her to write her best ever material.

She added: "I went to the studio and played for hours and I wrote what is going to be the greatest record of my career, a beautiful song about my father. "I remember watching the mascara tears flood the ivories and I thought, 'It's OK to be said.' I've learned to love my darkness." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Britney, Jason aren't engaged

WE LIKED HER BETTER WHEN SHE BEHAVED BADLY Britney Spears isn't getting married again, but she's still happily together with former agent Jason Trawick, according to The Insider. Rumours surfaced last month that Spears had popped the question in Australia and Trawick had turned her down, hightailing it back to L.A. "There was no proposal and they were never engaged," a source says. "Jason spent more time in Australia than originally planned. They are very happy." METRO WORLD NEWS

Pete apologizes for anthem gaffe

CAN ANYONE EXPLAIN WHY KATE MOSS DATED THIS GUY? Pete Doherty has apologized for upsetting a crowd in Munich by singing a defunct verse of the German national anthem that hasn't been used since the fall of the Third Reich, according to the BBC. "Pete himself is from Jewish descent and has fought against racism and fascism with numerous organizations," a spokesperson for the troubles singer says. Doherty was booed after singing, "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles," and was escorted off stage shortly after. His spokesperson claims he had been "unaware of the controversy" connected to the verse. METRO WORLD NEWS

Gere could be fined for cutting trees

NATURE HATER Richard Gere may be facing $50,000 US in fines for cutting down a clutch of trees on his Pound Ridge, N.Y., property without obtaining a permit first, according to the local Bedford Record-Review.

"He rehabilitated an old, decaying piece of property and people were very happy about that," editor R.J. Marx says. "The feeling is that he acted a bit precipitously in clearing the trees... He's generally a good neighbor. It was out of character." METRO WORLD NEWS

Dan's looking forward to having children

PLEASE JUST ADOPT US AND PUT US IN YOUR WILL Daniel Radcliffe knows how to keep himself occupied once the Harry Potter film franchise wraps up: starting a family. "I've got kids to have yet," the 20-year-old actor tells the BBC. "I'm not planning on it soon. That's one of the things I'm really looking forward to doing. I've been here when a lot of people here have had kids while on the film, and I've seen the change it's made in their life and how amazing it is." METRO WORLD NEWS

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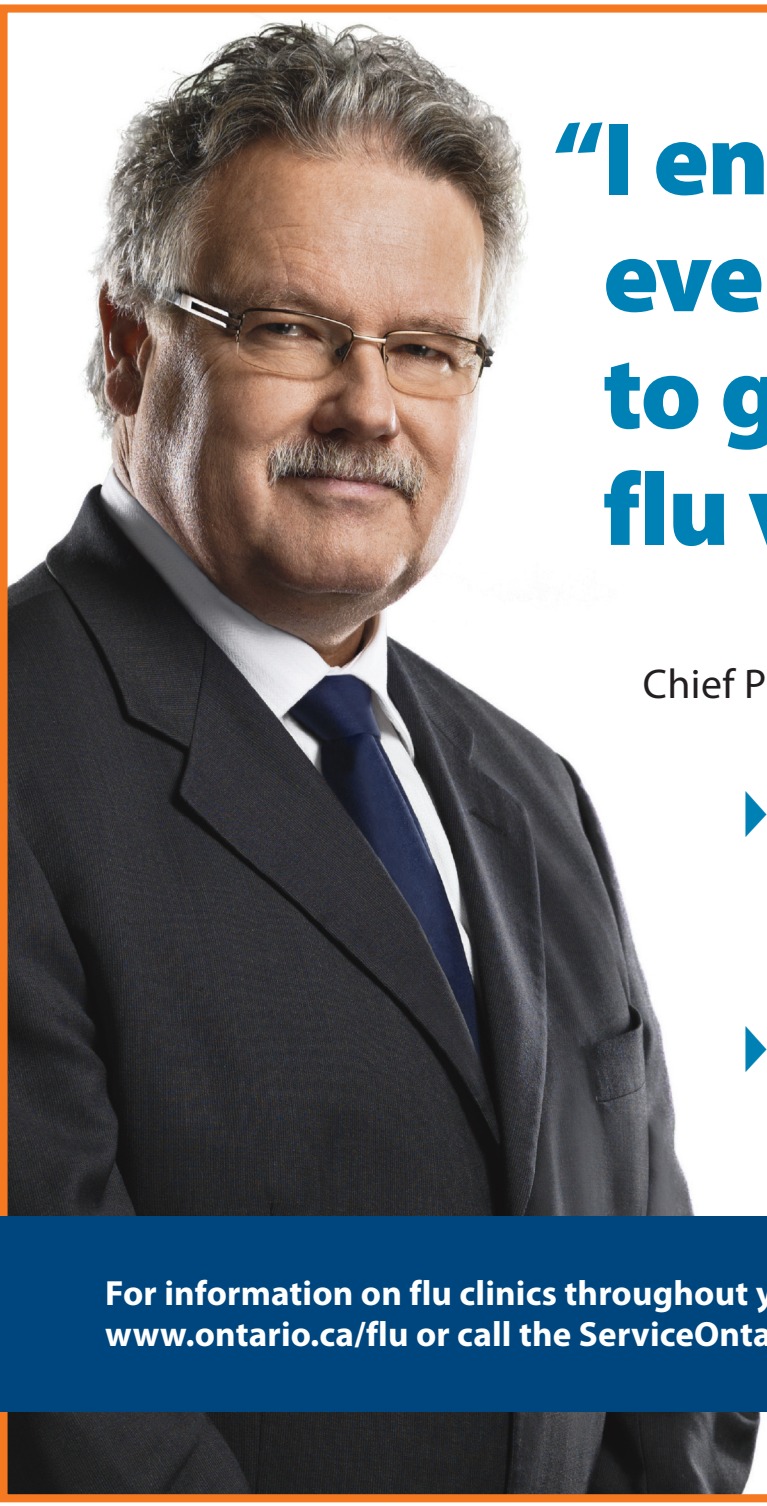

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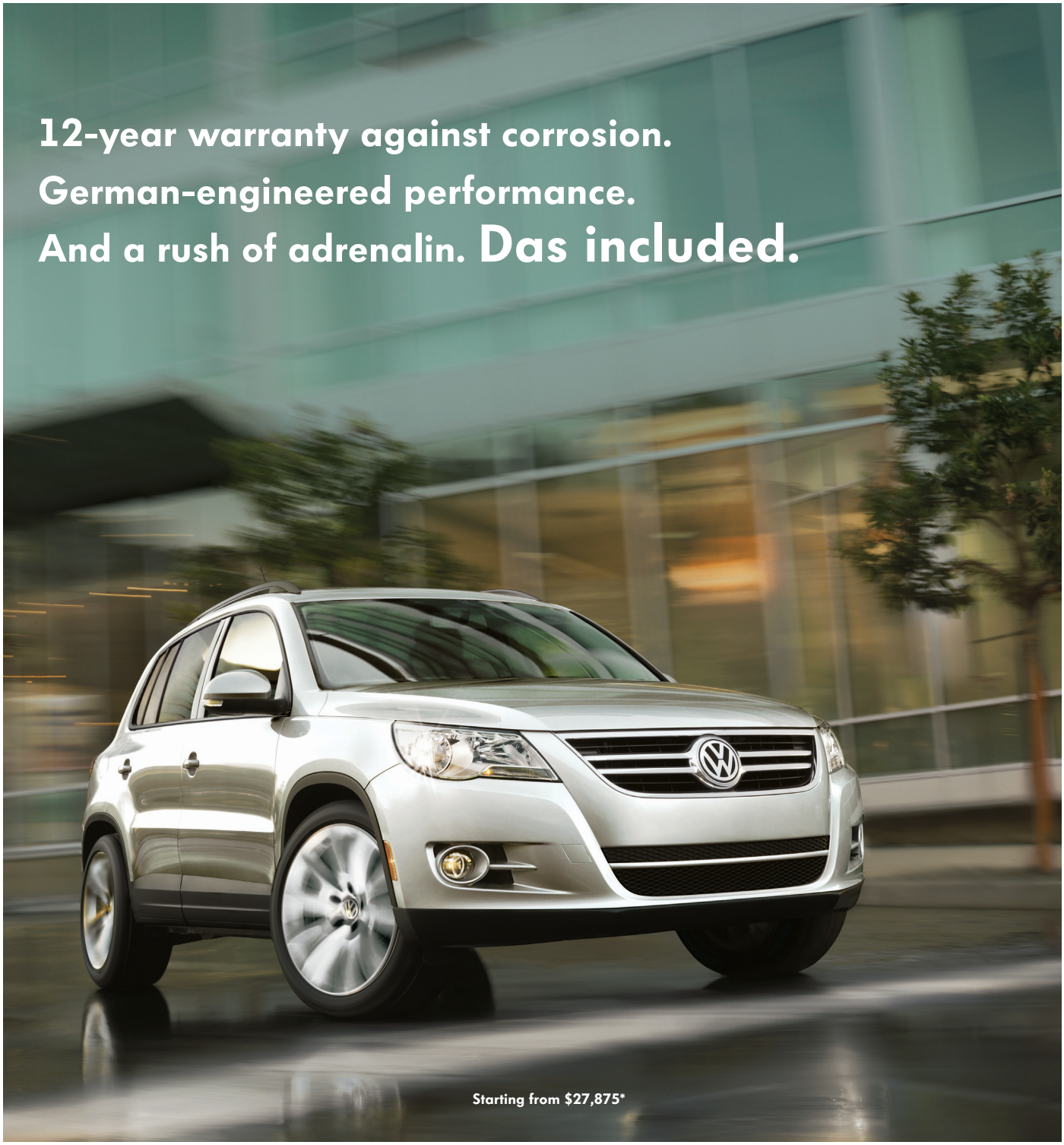

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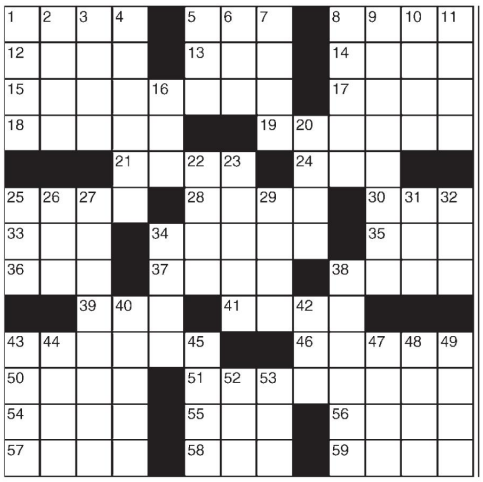

ACROSS

1 Tater
5 Spade or heart
8 Name for a Dalmatian
12 Top-notch
13 — carte
14 Poi source
15 Stove type
17 From the start
18 Young hog
19 Don quickly
21 Sodium chloride
24 Violinist Kavafian
25 "Clue" weapon
28 Rams fans?
30 Sajak or Summerall
33 Commotion
34 "Stop, sailor!"
35 Listener
36 Banned bug spray
37 1492 ship
38 Wan
39 Carnival city
41 Swallow hard
43 Rosebush protectors
46 Ruin
50 Drench
51 Deep-dish apple dessert
54 Church section
55 Past
56 Crystal gazer
57 Emeritus (Ab-br.)
58 Scarlet
59 Brutus' being

DOWN

1 Enervates
2 Milne bruin
3 "Do — others ..."
4 Cheapen
5 Chum
6 Under the weather
7 Picks up the check
8 Wood finish
9 Instruments
10 Sandwich cookie
11 Burg
16 H, to Hellenes
20 Final
22 Strauss of jeans fame
23 Nasality
25 "Awesome, dude!"
26 Peculiar
27 Braised beef
29 Birthright barterer
31 "That feels so good!"
32 Attempt
34 In due time
38 Place near
40 Seeing 58-across
42 1960s hallucinogen
43 Despot
44 Crosby co-star, often
45 Practise pugilism
47 Has bills
48 Mid-month day
49 Muse's harp
52 Time of your life?
53 Affirmative action

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	2						5	
	8	7		1		3	6	
3			6		8			1
		3	4		7	8		
		2	3		5	9		
8			5		2			4
	7	4		9		5	8	
	6						2	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

6	2	4	7	3	1	5	9	8
8	3	1	9	6	5	4	7	2
7	5	9	4	2	8	6	3	1
3	9	5	6	1	7	8	2	4
4	1	8	3	5	2	7	6	9
2	6	7	8	4	9	1	5	3
5	8	3	2	7	4	9	1	6
1	4	2	5	9	6	3	8	7
9	7	6	1	8	3	2	4	5

On the web

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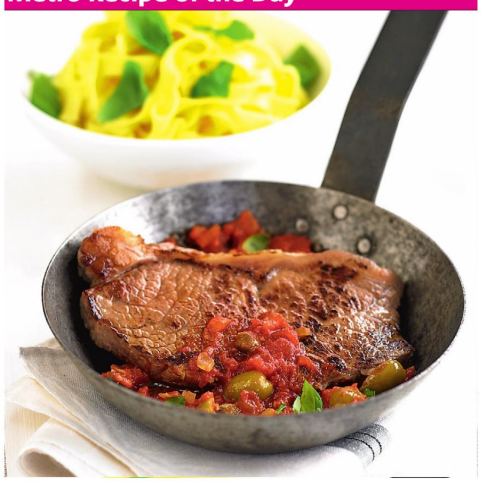
Metro Recipe of the Day



Pan-fried Steaks with Italian Sauce

INGREDIENTS:

4 sirloin steaks, trimmed
2 tbsp (25 ml) olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
14 oz (398 ml) can chopped tomatoes
6-3/4 tbsp (100 ml) white or red wine
2/3 lb (300 g) tagliatelle
1 tbsp (15 ml) capers, drained and rinsed
12 pitted black or green olives, halved
2 tbsp (25 ml) chopped fresh basil

METHOD:

1. Rub steaks with 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil and some black pepper. Heat large frying pan; cook steaks, about 2-1/2 minutes per side for rare, 4 minutes per side for medium, and 7 minutes per side for well done. Remove to plate using slotted spoon and keep warm.
2. Add remaining oil to pan, then add onion and garlic, and cook gently 5 minutes or until softened. Stir in tomatoes and wine. Cook gently 5-10 minutes, stirring occasionally to break down tomatoes.
3. While sauce is cooking, cook pasta according to package instructions. Drain. Stir capers into sauce with olives and basil; season to taste.
4. Return steaks to frying pan to heat through, spooning sauce over meat. Divide pasta among four plates. Serve steak and sauce over top.

SERVES 4

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

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ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
There really is no such thing as luck: Bear that thought in mind if someone tells you that you've been lucky. You created that "luck" for yourself.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Don't let today's full moon get you down. Soon you'll realize that what it took away from you is what you no longer need — in fact, it was in the way.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Although there is a full moon in your sign this is still potentially one of the best times of the year for you, so make the most of it.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
You need to be more enthusiastic about what you are doing, especially on the work front. Think of your job as being fun, and most likely it will be.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
Sit back and take what comes your way over the next 24 hours and trust that, on balance, it will be pleasant. Don't turn down a social invitation.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
It is important that you make an effort to patch up any minor disputes you may be having with partners and loved ones.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Someone will make you the proverbial offer you cannot refuse today but if you are smart you will do just that — there'll be a better offer coming soon.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
You may be finding it hard to make ends meet but what happens today will remind you how well off you are in more important ways.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
There's no point judging yourself by others' standards. In fact, the full moon urges you not to judge at all. Accept everything and everyone.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Why waste so much energy trying to do things that don't come naturally to you? Play to your strengths if you want to be happy and successful.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
If ever there was a time to make an extra special effort that time is now. Your efforts will be supported by people who want to see you do well.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
If you are faced with a big problem today you must attack it in a big way. Don't pretend it does not exist or it does not really matter — because it does.

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